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172 PAGES

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA

BOOK OF TESTS
SPECIAL ISSUE

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Superb budget DSLR

PLUS
KODAK P880
SAMSUNG PRO815
& FUJIFILM S5600
Three SLR alternatives

CANON IXUS 750
7MP flagship model

NIKON COOLPIX S4
Tiny 10x Superzoom

BIGGEST ISSUE OF THE YEAR!

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AOL Keyword: What Digital Camera

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WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA

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WELCOME...

...to our biggest issue of the year – our annual Book of Tests. If you're looking to buy a digital camera this Christmas, look no further. We've distilled and condensed all the camera tests we've done during 2005 and crammed them into this packed issue, along with brand new tests on seven of the latest new models, including the exciting new Olympus E-500 digital SLR.

You'll find 110 reviews in here, covering everything from sub-£100 point-and-shoot compacts to a £5000 professional DSLR, so you're sure to find your ideal camera here somewhere. Don't forget to check out the free accessory tests and 360° camera views on our website at **www.whatdigitalcamera.com**, and if you want to read the full, unabridged tests you can obtain these via our website too.

Next month is our annual Awards issue, where we name all the best products we've seen and tested during 2005. It goes on sale on 30th December, so don't miss it.

Have a great Christmas and New Year, and don't forget to take plenty of pictures!

Nigel Atherton
nigel_atherton@ipcmedia.com

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Imagine a camera that reached out to wherever your creativity took flight. Now grasp the reality: The new Samsung Pro 815.

Freedom of advanced photography

Built into the Samsung Pro 815 are advanced shooting functions: A 3 ring system on the lens for zoom, focus and exposure control. A 2-jog system for shutter & aperture and 11 scene modes. Full manual capability for total freedom of expression.

Freedom of world-class optics

The Pro 815 has a unique wide angle 15x zoom Schneider Kreuznach lens (28-420mm at 35mm equivalent). With this all-in-one lens you can conquer distance or get the widescreen view.

Freedom to never miss the detail

The Samsung Pro 815 has a massive rear 3.5" LCD with high resolution at 230K pixels and Transmissive Micro Reflective technology for use in light conditions. The top wide-angle colour LCD is an information panel which, at the touch of a button, becomes a waist-level shooting screen. The Pro 815 also records VGA movies with stereo sound.

Freedom to never miss a shot

The Pro 815 is ready to shoot with a fast start-up, capture, display and transfer rate. A high-capacity rechargeable battery gives you up to 450 shots on one charge (CIPA standard). Then, when things get really exciting, there's also a high-speed mode to minimise the effects of camera shake.

No extras needed: Creative freedom is built-in.

www.samsungcamera.co.uk

Samsung **Pro 815**

Freedom built in

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CAMERA NEWS

Nikon Launches D200 SLR

Successor to the D100 incorporates pro features

Nikon has launched the long-awaited D200 and a trio of DSLR accessories. The D200 is targeted at serious amateurs, or professional photographers looking for a second camera.

Featuring a Nikon F lens mount and a 10.2MP DX format CCD capable of capturing images 3872 x 2592 pixels in size, the the **D200** body costs £1299.99.

As it incorporates features such as 3D-Colour Matrix Metering II and the 11-area AF in the newly developed Multi-Cam 1000 Autofocus system, Nikon claims camera operation is similar to its professional SLR the D2X.

The D200 boasts a 0.15sec power-up and 50-millisecond shutter lag. The ultra-high-speed continuous shooting mode can capture 37 JPEG or 22 RAW pictures at 5fps, using a SanDisk Ultra II or Extreme 1GB card. Sensitivity is adjustable from 100 to 1600 ISO in 1/3, 1/2 or 1EV steps and can reach ISO 3200 in Hi-1 mode. The new Optical Low Pass Filter helps prevent fringing, shifting and moiré.

With a magnesium alloy body weighing 830g, the D200 includes a durable double-bladed shutter, while the pentaprism viewfinder provides 95% frame coverage and 0.94x magnification. There's a 2.5in back LCD and the largest top-plate LCD in the industry. The new EN-EL3e battery can capture 1800 pictures from a single charge.

Connection to a Global Positioning System is possible with an optional adaptor cord, and remote picture transfer is possible using the Wireless Transmitter WT-3. Other features include RGB histograms, an X-sync terminal and USB 2.0.

The D200 is available at the end of December with an 18-70mm lens for £1499.99 or with a 17-55mm lens for £2299.99.

Nikon has also announced the **AF-S DX VR-Zoom Nikkor 18-200mm f/3.5-5.6 IF ED** lens. At £549.99 it has improved Vibration Reduction (VR) technology for sharp photos using shutter speeds four times slower than a non-VR lens. The £169.99 **SB-R200 Remote Speedlight** and **SU-800 commander Unit** are available in two Macro lighting kits. The £549.99 Close-up Speedlight Commander Kit includes the SU-800, two SB-R200 units, lens adaptors and filters. The £379.99 Close-up Remote Kit SB-R1 includes two SB-R200s, adaptor rings and filters.

For more details, visit **www.nikon.co.uk** or call 0800 230220.

FULL STORY ON OUR WEBSITE

Sony Offers Slimline T9

Sony has introduced the T9, a slimline addition to the Cyber-shot range incorporating double 'anti-blur' technology and a Carl Zeiss lens.

The Super SteadyShot optical image stabiliser is designed to compensate for the effects of camera shake, while High Sensitivity includes Clear RAW NR technology, designed to reduce the effects of noise at higher ISO levels (up to 640.) This means that the T9 should be particularly suitable when shooting in low-light conditions or capturing moving objects.

The 3x optical Carl Zeiss Vario-Tessar lens uses a folded-lens path that doesn't protrude from the slim 19mm body. The 2.5in LCD has Sony's new Clear Photo technology improving brightness and resolution, while an anti-reflection layer reduces the effect of reflections in bright conditions. The battery can be recharged and promises over three hours of playback.

Incorporated into the Cyber-shot T9 is the Slideshow with Music function enabling the user to create slideshows in-camera. Music can be added using a selection of background melodies, or for a more personalised effect you can use your own music through the supplied Picture Package software.

The Cyber-shot DSC-T9 will retail for around £330. Find out more at **www.sony.co.uk** or by calling 08705 111999.

Canon Goes Wireless

The Digital IXUS Wireless is Canon's first wireless-enabled digital compact. Photos can be transferred remotely from the camera to a compatible computer within an approximate range of 30m.

Remote printing to a PictBridge-compatible printer is possible through a Wireless Print Adaptor, which is supplied with the camera and fits into the printer's USB port. Auto Transfer Mode means that as soon as pictures have been taken, they can be transferred straight to a computer, enabling real-time viewing. The camera can also be controlled remotely from a computer.

The 5MP **Digital IXUS Wireless** sports a so-called Slit and Frame design, with a silver finish and blue LED that illuminates during wireless activity. The slim profile is enabled by two Ultra High Refractive Index Aspherical elements in the 35-105mm (35mm equivalent) lens.

Fast camera performance and accurate picture reproduction is promised by the DIGIC II processor, along with accurate focusing from Canon's nine-point AiAF.

Other features include 14 shooting modes, 30fps VGA movies with sound, a 2in LCD and slideshow capabilities.

The Canon Digital IXUS Wireless costs around £399 and is available in January. Find out more at www.canon.co.uk or by calling 08705 143723.

Xacti Right

Sanyo has introduced the first compact in its 'E' range, with a 6MP sensor.

With dimensions of 97.7x59.5x22.8mm, the lightweight Xacti E6 features a 3x optical Konica Minolta inner optical zoom lens and a 3in Polysilicon LCD claiming excellent colour reproduction.

Fast shooting is promised from the unique touch-sensor shutter, which activates the autofocus the moment a finger touches the button. The Sanyo E6 uses interpolation to produce 10MP images and can capture 640x480 VGA movies, while Super Macro mode can focus as close as 1cm. Exposure modes include Best shot, (four photos at different exposures), landscape, and composite modes.

For a limited time the £250 E6 comes with a 512MB SD card and Lowepro case. Visit www.sanyo.co.uk or call 01923 246363.

Fisheye Business

Sigma has launched a telephoto and two fisheye lenses.

The £449.99 **15mm f/2.8 DG Diagonal Fisheye** lens is constructed from 7 elements in 6 groups. It has a maximum magnification of 1:3.8 and a minimum shooting distance of 15cm.

The **8mm f/4 EX DG Circular Fisheye** lens can focus 20cm away, producing circular images with a 180° angle-of-view. Sigma says that the £579.88 lens is suitable for photographers creating panoramas with stitching software. A reduction of the effects of ghost and lens flare is promised from a multi-layer coating in both lenses, which is also designed to produce photos with accurate colour balance.

The £629.99 ultra-telephoto **170-500mm f/5-6.3** lens, constructed from 13 elements in 11 groups. Three Special Low Dispersion elements and aspherical lens reduce chromatic aberration. With a maximum magnification of 1:6.6, it includes a rear focus system for fast auto focusing.

Call 01707 329999 or visit www.sigma-imaging-uk.com

snap shots

LOWEPRO WATERPROOF CAMERA BAG

The DryZone Rover incorporates a waterproof 'DryPod' for storing camera equipment and a hydration system for water. Designed for outdoor photographers, the waterproof bag features SlipLock loops and a Trekker Tripod Mount, a DryFlo padded back panel and a contoured shoulder harness.

Constructed from durable polyurethane, the built-in hydration system can hold 1.5-litres of water and the bag is buoyancy certified up to 35 pounds. DryZone Rover will be available from mid-November for £229. Find out more at **www.lowepro.co.uk** or by calling 0870 420 4211.

GITZO PRO CLASSIC TRIPOD

Constructed from aluminium, the Gitzo GB 1140 joins the Pro Classic range. The lightweight tripod includes a reversible centre column, non-slip foam rubber sleeves and a hanging hook for weighing it down. Up to 7.98kg can be supported by the tripod, which includes a built-in spirit level and a compass. It is supplied with a carrying bag, tool bag and adjustable shoulder strap.

The GB 1140 is available from JP Distribution, priced £79, and £116.99 with the MH1001 head – a saving of £30 on the purchase price.

For more information log onto **www.johnsons-photopia.co.uk** or call 01782 753300.

FOUR FROM FUJIFILM

Fujifilm has introduced four flash card readers offering fast USB 2.0 picture transfer and a blue LED. Retailing for £34.99, the DCR2-161 can read 16 types of memory card, and includes a three-port USB 2.0 hub, enabling connection to a PDA or digital camera.

Compatible with xD-Picture Cards, the DCR2-XD comes with a power supply. The DCR2-71 can read seven types of memory card including SecureDigital, MiniSD, RS-MMC, MMCmobile and Multimedia, while the DCR2-S is compatible with Memory Stick, MS Pro, MS Duo and MS Pro Duo.

All three will cost £12.99. Find out more at **www.fujifilm.co.uk** or call 0870 084 1310.

NIKON RECALLS DSLR BATTERY

Nikon has issued a voluntary recall of some units of its EN-EL3 lithium-ion battery found in the D50, D70 and D100 and available as an accessory with the D70s, after incidents of overheating during charging.

Nikon claims that the error is not a design fault, but a problem that occurred during the manufacturing process between May and September 2004 and has elected to replace free of charge all batteries that were made during this period. The error hasn't caused personal injury, but has resulted in damage to what Nikon describes as 'adjacent material' while being recharged.

For a list of the batch numbers of the affected batteries, log onto **www.europe-nikon.com/support** or call 02871 305 500.

BARNARDO'S 2006 PHOTOGRAPHIC CALENDAR

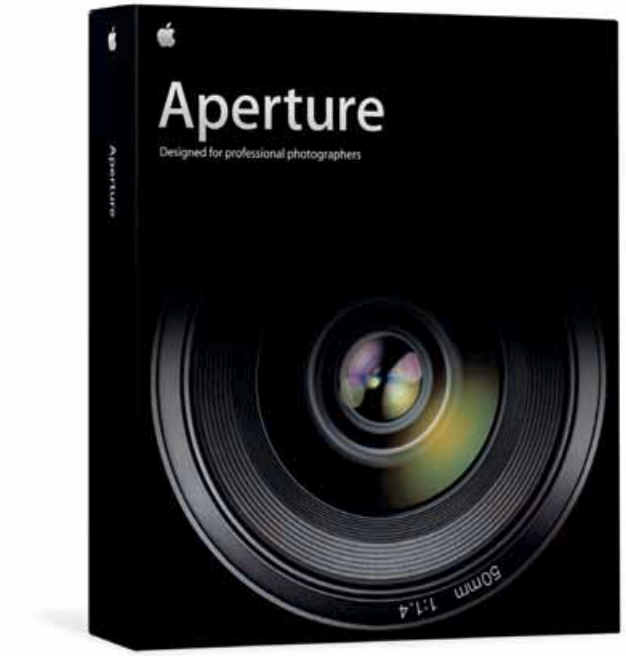
Children's charity Barnardo's has launched its 2006 calendar composed of pictures from its recent photographic competition.

Budding photographers from all over the UK submitted entries based on the theme 'The Face of Multicultural Britain Today' in three age groups: 10-15 years old, 16-25 years old, and 25 plus.

Retailing for £3.99 each, the calendar will be available online and in Barnardo's stores. Find out more at **www.barnardos.org.uk/shop**.

SOFTWARE NEWS

Apple's new pro image processor



Apple has launched a ground-breaking image-processing application aimed at helping professional and enthusiast photographers organise and edit their images.

Aperture promises super-fast operation and supports RAW files from all the major manufacturers as well as TIFFS and JPEGS.

Users can navigate projects using the full-screen workspace (an industry first), which can be extended to show multiple displays and images, designed to make photo comparisons easy.

Images can be automatically grouped into Stacks based upon the time between each shot, while the Loupe tool enables you to look at pictures in detail without having to zoom or pan across large files. The virtual Light Table functions as a free-form space that can be used for creating photo layouts, which can be arranged and resized.

RAW files can be enhanced within Aperture without being converted. Aperture doesn't alter the original pixels of a photo, enabling you to delete or adjust any changes you have made while you work. Additionally it can create multiple copies of the same file, without taking up hard drive space. The program supports ColourSync profiles and includes an Automator batch-processing function.

Aperture will be available from the Apple Store and authorised retailers for £349. Find out more at www.apple.com/aperture

Extensis Extends

Extensis has announced Portfolio 8, the latest version of its digital asset-management program that digital photographers can use to organise their picture collections.

A series of improvements have been made to the galleries including a Full Custom Sort, which enables users to re-order, drag or sort their pictures in the galleries, SmartGalleries and disc folders.

The program automatically remembers the functionality for each user. Additionally, custom sorts can be applied to a shared catalogue that multiple users can access.

Files from multiple galleries or searches can be sorted or edited within the new Scratchpad Galleries, creating a single gallery that can be printed or published, while for personal files the Public/Private galleries can be locked or only be viewed by the creator.

Fast Cataloguing adds files to the catalogue that the user can work on immediately, even while other tasks are being performed in the background.

Log onto www.extensis.com to find out more.

Premium RAW

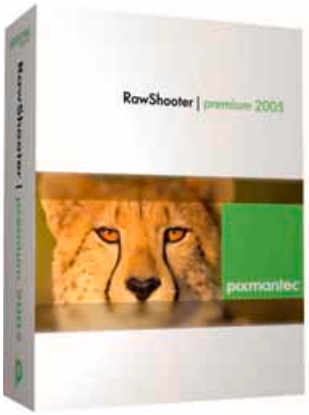
Pixmantec has introduced a premium version of its RAW workflow software: RawShooter Premium 2006.

RAW by RAW comparison enables up to four RAW files to be compared simultaneously, with the option to navigate and magnify them by 800%. The Integrated Downloader speeds up transfer, flattening all source directories into one and creating picture previews. The program offers the same RAW file support of its stablemate Essentials, including Adobe DNG, with additional support for the Canon 5D and Canon 1D Mark II N.

There are new adjustment tools, while FastProof and FastBrowse promise to speed up workflow.

Download it from the site www.pixmantec.com for $99 (£56).

Pixmantec has also announced a plug-in for RawShooter Premium 2006. RawShooter Colour Engine supports profiles from a range of Nikon and Canon DSLRs. Available to download from www.pixmantec.com, it costs £34 ($59).



Corel's Snap and Paint

Corel Painter Essentials 3 enables users to get creative with their digital photos by transforming them into paintings.

Integral to the program are the new Photo Painting Palettes that can turn a digital photo into a work of art in three quick steps: Underpainting, Auto-Painting and Restoration. The user can choose from 18 brush categories replicating effects such as chalk, airbrushes, oils, blenders and tinting. In an improvement to the previous program, Corel Painter Essentials 3 replicates the effect of Artists Oils that can be blended to create new shades and tones. Quick Clone, Rubber Stamp Tool and Eraser Tool are among the other new features, while Sketch Effect turns a photo into a pencil drawing. Corel has enhanced the Digital Watercolour effects; they now remain wet between sessions, so users can finish one session and begin another.

Corel Painter Essentials 3 supports Paint Shop Pro X, Adobe Photoshop CS, Photoshop Elements, Apple iPhoto and Wacom Pen Tablets. Retailing at £69 the program is available now from www.corel.co.uk/pe3.

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ACCESSORIES NEWS

View Pics On The Move

Epson has introduced a new portable storage viewer with a 80GB hard drive and 3.8in LCD.

Sporting a series of enhancements since the P-2000, the **P-4000 Multimedia Storage Viewer** supports RAW and JPEG file formats. It can also play MP3 and AAC music files and Motion JPEG and MPEG4 movies.

With a resolution of 640x480 pixels, the LCD monitor incorporates Epson Photo Fine technology promising sharp, detailed images with accurate colour representation.

Pictures can be copied onto the viewer from a memory card using CompactFlash and Secure Digital slots, before being transferred onto a computer via fast USB 2.0. Pictures can also be printed using a compatible printer. An A/V connection enables photographs to be viewed on television.

Featuring an aluminium casing, the Epson P-4000 Multimedia Storage Viewer will retail for £499.99. Find out more at **www.epson.co.uk** or by calling 0800 220546.

Epson newbies

Described as 'the highest quality photo printer in its class', the Epson Stylus Photo R340 is an A4 printer, priced £149, with an optimised resolution of 5760x1440 dpi. Print speeds are less than a minute for a 6x4in print and the six ink cartridges can be replaced individually for cost efficiency.

A 2.4in colour LCD can be used to preview, add effects, and select a print layout. PictBridge support enables prints to be obtained from a digital camera or mobile phone (with optional adaptor.)

With a 1.5in LCD, the £99 **Stylus Photo R240** is Epson's second new printer. A 6x4in print takes 47 seconds, printing 24 borderless prints in 20 minutes. A4 print speeds are 20ppm in mono and 19ppm in colour. PhotoEnhance technology is included on both models.

Find out more at **www.epson.co.uk** or by calling 0800 220546.

Wacom Wideboy

The Intuos3 A5 Wide is Wacom's first wide-format tablet aimed at pros and enthusiast photographers.

To complement widescreen displays the tablet has a 16:10 aspect ratio and 6x11in work-area. Wacom says a wide-format tablet makes it easier to work on a wide-format display or double monitor. The tablet features a 5,080dpi resolution, and the Grip Pen and Airbrush have 1,024 levels of pressure sensitivity. Tool ID detects different tools and their individual settings. Two Touch Strips enable specific tools to be touch activated.

The Wacom Intuos3 Art Maker pen incorporates rotation sensing and pressure-and-tilt technology, for replicating brush, marker strokes or calligraphic pen effects. Compatible with PCs and Macs, Intuos3 A5 Wide costs £249 from Computers Unlimited. Bundled with it is Corel Paint Essentials2. Visit **www.wacom.com**

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quick view

PRICE £600

- SENSOR: 8.89MP total/8MP effective
- SHUTTER SPEED: 60-1/4000sec
- ISO: 100-400 boost up to 1600
- EXP MODES: P, A, S, M, 15 Scene
- FLASH: Pop up GN 13, hotshoe
- VIEWFINDER/MONITOR: Opt/2.5" LCD
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Digital E-volution

The E-500 boasts a whole host of impressive features, and at a reasonable price, but do its images do the specification justice? **Jamie Harrison** checks out Olympus's latest Four-Thirds camera

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

Top:
Using the shadow spot meter enabled this low-key image

Above:
There's plenty of detail here and the white balance is spot on

Right:
Images from the E-500 are pin sharp even with the basic kit lens

Olympus E-500

With the arrival of Olympus's third E-system camera, we see a return to traditional values, with a camera that looks like a traditional SLR. And it seems like a tasty one too. Not only does it have 8 million pixels, it offers something different in terms of digital photographic theory.

Olympus has always ploughed its own furrow, both in camera design and technology. The digital age has given the company a new edge – Olympus was an early and successful adopter of the new technology. A couple of years ago the emerging SLR market offered Olympus the chance to take its lateral thinking into a new direction, with the Four-Thirds system.

FOUR-THIRDS REFRESHER

In a nutshell, Olympus claims that with digital we can break free of the limitations of film, that the differences between film and digital sensors required a rethink of previous formats, optics and technology – and so Olympus came up with the Four-Thirds system. Physical differences between film and sensors are marked: film is flat, sensors are 'bumpy' (due to the individual pixels). With traditional lenses where light is coming into the lenses at extreme angles, especially wideangle lenses, pixel shading can occur. That is, pixels can obstruct the light wave to neighbouring pixels. This leads to vignetting or data loss. Olympus's solution is twofold. The first is to design lenses that are near telecentric. That is, the elements bend the light as it goes through the lens, resulting in the light waves hitting the sensor perpendicularly. This means each individual pixel captures the maximum amount of information.

The second element to this is the sensor itself; the 4/3rds sensor is smaller than an APS sensor commonly found in consumer SLRs. The image area – that is, the circle projected by the lens onto the sensor – is 4/3 of an inch in diameter. The sensor is smaller (and rectangular), and fits perfectly within the image circle, allowing those perpendicular light waves to completely cover the sensor. Of course, a cynic might say that it is easier to offer accurate coverage when the sensor is smaller, reducing the acute angles that a larger sensor would be susceptible to anyway.

The final major point about the Four-Thirds system is the lens mount.

Olympus wisely made the Four-Thirds system an open standard. This means that unlike, say, Canon and Olympus, other manufacturers are free to make Four-Thirds cameras and lenses, and a few have signed up.

It is interesting to note that, when Olympus >>

see more on the web

Download our Olympus E-500 test images on our website,

www.whatdigitalcamera.com

front

Olympus has returned to the traditional pentaprism to produce a conventional looking camera. The lens mount is the open standard 4/3rds mount

top

The grip is comfortable, with plenty of room to curl the fingers around. There's a hotshoe for external flash

side

The camera has a built-in pop-up flash. Image transfer is via USB 2.0

up against

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buying guide

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Olympus E-500

FOUR-WAY CONTROLLER
The directional arrows can be used to rapidly change certain functions. They are also used to navigate the menu and scroll through images in review mode

VIEWFINDER
The optical viewfinder is reasonably bright but quite small and, like the sensor, has a 4:3 ratio

LCD DISPLAY
The large 2.5-inch screen is bright and clear. Relevant shooting information is displayed and some changes can be made here

White Balance
AF Point selector

WHITE BALANCE/ AF POINT SELECTOR
The WB button function can be changed in the menu to DoF preview, for example. The AF point selector is used in conjunction with the command dial above, which is fiddly

launched the E1, one of the major points was that old 35mm lenses failed to provide optimum image quality, and file efficiently. At the time, one of the major reasons for buying a DSLR was that users already had the lenses so they could stay with a system they knew. The past couple of years, however, has seen new lenses from all of the major manufacturers that are digitally optimised to match the new cameras. It seems that Olympus's radical idea was on the right track after all.

THE THIRD E CAMERA

But I digress. The E-500 marks something of a backtrack, over the radical design of the E-300, although Olympus promises to continue to experiment with form and design in the future. So here is a traditional-looking camera with many of the features that attracts Olympus users in the first place. First, the camera is small, which has always been one of Olympus's attractions. However unlike other small SLRs from the likes of Pentax and even Canon, the smaller sensor of the E system means the lenses can be much smaller too. Instead of a 1.5x magnification ratio of APS-C sensor equipped cameras, Olympus offers a 2x magnification. So a 25mm lens is the equivalent to the standard 50mm lens. This is particularly useful for telephoto, where an old type of heavy 200mm lenses, for example, can now be packaged into the shorter focal length of 100mm so the equivalent lenses are smaller and lighter too.

The E-500 offers a surprising amount of features for what is essentially an entry-level camera. Aside from a full set of the usual exposure modes, both automatic and manual, there is also quite a comprehensive set of scene

> 'The E-500 offers a surprising amount of features for an entry-level camera'

modes: 15 in all including Portrait and Landscape and so on, as well as other useful modes such as Children, Document and Sunset. The system is split in two: the most used scene modes are on the mode dial, while a 'scene' position on the mode dial takes you to the menu where the wider choice is found.

Among the most impressive of the features is the metering options. Considering the price, the E-500 is remarkably equipped with a new 49-point digital ESP system, which is a multi-zone system that can also be linked to the autofocus points for accurate metering on a central subject.

Alternatively a 2% spot metering is included, along with a highlight and shadow spot metering options. With this you can spot meter in shadow or highlight areas and the camera makes the necessary exposure compensation to achieve the best detail. It's essentially an automatic exposure compensation system, for adjusting high or low-key subjects. Of course, there is also the trusty old centreweighted metering which still comes in useful after all these years.

I mentioned that the metering can be attached to the AF points. The AF is actually a pretty nifty operator, with three AF points that can be automatically, or individually selected. There's an option of single and continuous AF, or manual focus. A nice touch is an option to combine the auto and manual focus, which is ideal for fine tuning focus, especially if using macro or telephoto lenses at wide apertures where depth of field is narrow.

There is a downside to the focus control, though. The position of the focus point selector is in the top right corner of the camera back. Immediately above that is the command dial. To change focus points you need to press the selector button and then turn the command dial to the required point. This is really fiddly and slow, in fact, because the camera is small and the top-plate is compact. So when trying to change focus points with my eye to the eyepiece, I kept reaching for the main mode dial. After a

image quality

The Olympus E-500 is capable of some very nice images indeed, especially at the lower end of the ISO range. Where the E-300 was widely criticised for its levels of image noise, Olympus seems to have overcome many of those problems.

Similarly, in comparison to images from the E-1, the higher ISO speeds are much improved. But it's still not perfect in that regard. Other cameras, notably Canon models, handle high ISO noise better, but the E-500 is by no means the worst.

Colour is generally very good, though keep an eye on the white balance in some images. RAW images are easily remedied in this respect. Incidentally the camera comes with Olympus Master software for image conversion, which allows several changes to RAW images, rather than just the conversion that some makers' software does. Olympus Studio is faster and more feature laden but costs more, while, at the time of writing, Photoshop doesn't support the E-500.

Overall I was very pleased with the images, and there are few problems that can't be fixed by changing a setting somewhere in the camera. I was lucky enough to have great autumn weather, which can be harsh, leading to some blown-out highlights. But the camera handled them better than I expected and a small tweak to the contrast level, or switching to high-key mode, really helped.

Zuiko Lenses

The Olympus E-500 comes in a variety of kits with different lenses. Our sample was sent with the Zuiko Digital 14-45mm f/3.5-5.6. The 2x magnification of the 4/3rds system means this is the equivalent of 28-90mm in 35mm terms. For a kit lens, it's not a bad performer. While not the fastest in the world, it works well with the camera and is pin sharp.

I also used a 50-200mm lens for the test, as in this image, which again is known by the camera and optical faults were corrected for in camera.

Olympus E-500

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA

HOTSHOE
As well as the pop-up flash in the pentaprism, the E-500 accepts external flash units via the hotshoe. There's no PC socket for studio flash, so an X sync adapter would need to be used

MODE DIAL
Features all the usual MASP controls, as well as Auto. Commonly used scene modes can also be accessed here, while more scene modes can be accessed in the 'SCENE' position. These can then be selected via the LCD.

<< week of use I still hadn't really got used to the system and in a fast-moving situation could easily have missed several shots. A toggle switch, such as Canon's, is a better solution than this.

It would also be nice to have the AE Lock next to the focus selector instead of the manual white balance control, so that you would be able to easily select and then lock focus and exposure. I can see that you would maybe keep the two separate to avoid accidentally locking exposure, but I would prefer it. However, there are ways around this problem, of which more later.

One of the features that has proved popular on the E system is the anti-dust feature. Whenever a lens is changed on an SLR, there is a danger that dust will land on the sensor, which will then be visible on all the pictures. This is compounded more on digital cameras by static from the sensor, and is even worse if the camera is not turned off when switching lenses. Olympus's solution is to blast the sensor's filter with supersonic waves. The dust is essentially shaken off the sensor and is caught on a sticky catch pad. Every time the camera is switched on, this is performed, illustrated by an animation on the LCD. It slows down start-up time by a second or so, but is so useful that it can be forgiven.

Another nice touch that we don't usually expect on a camera at this level is the ability to record RAW and JPEG images simultaneously. Yes it's a common feature on most cameras, but only the higher-end (ie expensive) models allow you to choose the JPEG quality. Happily, the E-500 does too, so a choice of three JPEG modes are available.

A similar situation occurs in regard to media cards. Most DSLRs, except the high-end ones, only accept one card. The E-500 takes two: CompactFlash and xD. It doesn't offer simultaneous recording, or the option to save JPEG to one and RAW to another, but what do you want for £600

As Jimmy Cricket used to say, 'There's more'. The digital image controls include both sRGB and Adobe RGB, as well as the option to change tone, saturation and so on. There's a choice to set controls for high-key and low-key subjects too, which can further be enhanced by setting the gradation controls on the camera. I've not seen many cameras recently that offer so many variables. For example, the black and white controls have the option to use digital filters, not only to add tints such as sepia and so on (which is usually better to perform on the PC later anyway), but also, black and white modes offer yellow, orange, red and green filters to adjust the tones of an image just as you would with traditional glass filters.

Another nice bonus is the anti-shock feature. This dampens the mirror, to reduce camera shake during long exposures or with telephoto lenses. It's not quite up to the Konica Minolta Anti-Shake CCD but I certainly found that it gave me an extra half stop of safe, handheld shooting. It's not massive, but it helps.

'The E-500 can record RAW and JPEG images simultaneously... and allows you to choose JPEG quality'

Most of the camera features are buried in the menu, and this is definitely worth exploring while you use the camera. For a start, the menu is displayed on a large 2.5inch monitor, which also displays all the camera shooting information. The menu opens up a world of possibilities, including assigning new or customised commands to buttons on the camera. Remember I talked about the AE/AF lock button. You can assign that functionality in a variety of ways to the shutter release button. The function button can be used for manual white balance (default) or be changed to depth of field preview, or custom settings and others. You can even change the direction of the focus ring if you wish.

Incidentally, a proper depth of field button is something that I would like to see on the camera. I often use both DOF preview and manual white balance, and I'm sure landscape photographers, for example, would do the same. In all, though, the Olympus E-500 has a fantastic feature set with excellent handling. While not totally perfect, its adaptability makes it one of the most useful cameras at this price.

VERDICT
The Olympus E-500 is a vast improvement on the E-300 in both design and image quality. The sheer amount of technology means that the camera has something for everyone, and it packs a surprising amount into a small body at a reasonable price. At this rate I really can't wait to see the next E-system camera – the system is going from strength to strength. WDC

specifications

MANUFACTURER:	Olympus
MODEL:	E-500
PRICE:	£600
CCD:	4/3 type Full Frame Transfer CCD 8MP effective/8.89 MP total 3264x2448pixels
MAX PRINT SIZE:	16x12-inch at 200dpi
LENS:	Four-Thirds mount
SHUTTER SPEEDS:	60-1/4000 sec
ISO:	100-400 with boost up to 1600
EXP MODES:	Auto, M, A, S, P, 15 scene modes
FLASH:	Hotshoe, Pop-up GN 13m
DRIVE MODES:	Single, continuous 2.5fps JPEG to capacity of media card
METER:	Digital ESP, centre-weighted average and spot, Highlight and shadow based spot metering
WHITE BALANCE:	Auto, 8 preset, custom, colour temperature, bracketing
FOCUS:	3-point AF: Single AF, continuous AF, manual focus, single AF + MF, and continuous AF + MF
VIEWFINDER:	Pentaprism 95% coverage
MONITOR:	2.5in TFT LCD, 230,000 pixels
CONNECTION:	USB 2.0 Full speed, A/V
REC FORMAT:	JPEG, TIFF, RAW (12-bit)
FILE SUPPORT:	EXIF 2.21, DPOF, DCF, PIM II, PictBridge
VIDEO OUTPUT:	Pal, NTSC
POWER:	Lithium-ion
STORAGE:	CF I/II, xD,
OTHER:	Adobe RGB, sRGB, Anti-dust
DIMENSIONS:	129.5 x 94.5 x 66mm
WEIGHT:	435g

scores

PROS: Feature packed, price, image quality

CONS: Some fiddly button placement, no dedicated depth of field button

features	19
ease of use	17
image quality	17
design	18
value	18

89%

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SAMSUNG PRO 815

quick view

PRICE £550

- **CCD** 2/3-inch CCD 8.0 MP effective, 8.3MP total
- **LENS** f2.2-4.6 (35mm equ 28-420mm)
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 15 – 1/4000th sec
- **ISO** Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, P, A, S, M, 2 Custom, 11 Scene modes
- **FLASH** 0.7m – 6.0m (W) 1.5 - 3.0m (T)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Electronic 235,000 pixels/ 3.5-inch TFT LCD 235,000 pixels
- **OTHER** CF I/II, Adobe RGB, sRGB, USB 2.0, PictBridge, 640 x 480 movie at 25fps, 6 colour effects, 16:9 shooting
- **POWER** Li-ion SLB-1974
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 135.5 x 87 x 78.6mm/870.5g

top

The (optional) Samsung SEF-42A flashgun can be attached to the hotshoe

front

The lens barrel includes three rings, to adjust focus, exposure compensation and zoom

side

USB, A/V and DC connections are located on the side, protected by a hinged flap

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up against

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buying guide

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WE WILL HELP YOU CHOOSE THE RIGHT CAMERA AT THE RIGHT PRICE

8 mega pixels

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

Samsung Pro 815

Hannah Bouckley looks at Samsung's most ambitious digital camera to date

The PRO815 is a radical departure for Samsung. The company's prime focus in the digital camera market – until now – has been on budget and slimline 'fashion' compacts, but with its versatile lens and solid black body, the large PRO815 is completely different.

Weighing 870g, it is a hefty beast, slightly heavier than its rivals the Panasonic DMC-FZ30 (740g) and Fujifilm S9500 (645g) so two-handed operation is required. I didn't find the camera particularly comfortable to hold; the rectangular edge digs into your hand.

Dominating the back is the 3.5in LCD, billed as the 'world's largest.' Its size obviously restricts space, but its 235,000-pixel resolution provides clear viewing in various shooting conditions. The electronic viewfinder is a useful alternative, though yellow tones are a little strong. A novel feature is the top LCD, designed for waist-level shooting. At about 1.5in it seems tiny, but is an interesting idea.

The undoubted highlight of the PRO815 is the Schneider-Kreuznach 28-420mm lens, making it useful for both wideangle and telephoto photography. A ring around the lens barrel ensures that you can zoom in and out smoothly with maximum control.

Choose from single and continuous autofocus options. You also get three AF focus point options: Fixed-Spot AF, Adjustable Spot AF (where you can adjust the position of the focus point using the four-way controller), and Wide AF (which selects the focus point depending on the location of the subject).

HANDLING & PERFORMANCE

Autofocus is a bit sluggish, particularly at telephoto and no match for a DLSR – tracking moving objects is tricky. The AF lamp ensures that the camera focuses accurately in low-light conditions. Adjust the focus manually by twisting a ring around the lens barrel.

White balance, ISO, flash, metering, self-timer, macro and drive controls are positioned on the top-plate and accessed by the navigator. In a process borrowed from DSLRs, settings are changed by pressing the relevant button and turning one of the two jog dials. This approach is much quicker than hunting through the menu to find a command.

Start-up times of around a second are impressive. Processing times vary; we waited 14 seconds for a RAW file to write to a Delkin 640MB CompactFlash card, during which time the camera is frozen. Cycle time for a 3264x2448 Superfine JPEG is just over 1.5secs.

The PRO815 has an impressive feature set that will appeal to serious amateurs: aperture priority, shutter priority, manual and program modes are selectable through the mode dial. Alongside two custom settings, the White Balance can be adjusted from 3000k – 10,000k. The camera supports sRGB and Adobe RGB colour spaces, there is a live histogram and it offers RAW shooting.

Inexperienced users can access 11 scene and one fully automatic exposure mode. If you aren't sure what exposure to use, the PRO815 includes white balance bracketing, focus bracketing and exposure bracketing, which capture three (or five shots) each at a slightly different setting. Another useful feature is the current and last shot comparison, which lets you view (as a tiny thumbnail) the previous photograph alongside a live view of the current scene, enabling you to compare the picture and camera settings, before making adjustments accordingly.

One of the main problems users encounter with cameras with a large telephoto capability, is camera shake. Samsung has incorporated a High Speed Shutter (HSS) mode into the PRO815, which, when selected, automatically increases the shutter speed and selects an appropriate sensitivity level. This

LCD BUTTON
Press the LCD button to swap between the back LCD, electronic viewfinder and the unique top-plate LCD

FOUR-WAY CONTROLLER
Assign a frequently used command, such as Quality, Effect, Sharpness and LCD brightness, to the right 'C' button on the 4-way controller

ZOOM MAGNIFIER BUTTON
Check the focus by pressing the Digital Zoom/Enlargement button and use the second Jog dial to zoom in. The process is rather laborious if you are in a hurry

image quality

Producing shots with fairly bold colours, the PRO815 produces mixed results.

Results are not particularly sharp, especially at telephoto, and there was evidence of barrel distortion at wideangle – hardly surprising with a 28mm lens.

Skin tones are pleasing, displaying nuances accurately. Unfortunately noise is evident at ISO 100 in the shadows, increasing at ISO 200 and worsening considerably when ISO 400 is selected. Additionally, purple fringing can be problematic and occurs too frequently.

Macro mode is impressive. It can focus as close as 10cm, but adjust the focal length to 50-100mm and you can access super-macro mode, which shortens the focus distance to 3cm, producing sharp and detailed pictures.

see more on the web

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method isn't particularly versatile; it can't be used in shutter priority or manual modes, and the shutter and sensitivity are chosen by the camera. While shots are sharper, results are a bit disappointing, primarily

'Settings are changed via a method borrowed from digital SLRs'

because you can't control the sensitivity, so noise can be problematic. Ultimately the feature doesn't offer anything you can't adjust manually; an optical image stabiliser would be preferable.

The PRO815 captures 640x480 AVI movies at 15fps until the CompactFlash card reaches maximum capacity. Unfortunately 30fps movie are restricted to 30-second clips. Results are satisfactory and, pleasingly, you can use the zoom. Burst mode captures 1fps, increasing to 2.5fps in High Speed mode, though the LCD is disabled. Ultra High Speed continuous shooting takes 10 shots a second for three seconds, before rather tiresomely playing them all back to you.

VERDICT

Featuring the biggest lens of the current prosumer cameras, the PRO815 has an advanced feature set making it a viable alternative for those who can't afford (or can't be bothered with) a DSLR. Despite its weight and rather awkward shape, I like the camera; it has lots of features, a good LCD and impressive battery life. It can produce some good pictures, though noise and fringing are problematic. The big flaw is the lack of image stabiliser. While the PRO815 is no match for the budget DSLRs, this camera puts Samsung in the big league. **WDC**

specifications

MANUFACTURER:	Samsung
MODEL:	PRO 815
PRICE:	£550
CCD:	2/3in CCD 8.0 MP effective, 8.3MP total
MAX PRINT SIZE:	16.32 x 12.24-inch at 200dpi
LENS:	7.2-108 mm f2.2-4.6 (35mm equivalent 28-420mm)
SHUTTER SPEEDS:	15 – 1/4000th sec
ISO:	Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400
EXP MODES:	Auto, M, A, S, P, 2 Custom, 11 scene modes
FLASH:	0.7m – 6.0m (W) 1.5 - 3.0m (T)
DRIVE MODES:	Single, Continuous, Continuous HS, Continuous UHS, Interval
METER:	Multi-pattern, spot, centre-weighted
WHITE BALANCE:	Auto, 5 preset, 2 custom, colour temp
FOCUS:	Wide-point AF, Fixed-Spot, Adjustable-Spot AF, Manual
VIEWFINDER:	Electronic, 235,000 pixels
MONITOR:	3.5-inch TFT LCD 235,000 pixels/ top 1.44-inch TFT LCD 115,000 pixels
CONNECTION:	USB 2.0, AV, DC
REC FORMAT:	JPEG, RAW, TIFF, AVI, WAV
FILE TYPE:	PictBridge 1.0, EXIF 2.2, DPOF 1.1
VIDEO OUTPUT:	NTSC, Pal
POWER:	Li-ion SLB-1974
STORAGE:	Compact Flash I/II
OTHER:	Adobe RGB, sRGB, 640 x 480 movie at 25fps, 6 colour effects, 16:9 shooting
DIMENSIONS:	135.5 x 87 x 78.6mm
WEIGHT:	870.5g

scores

PROS: LCD, versatile lens

CONS: Noise levels, excessive fringing, no optical image stabiliser

features	18
ease of use	17
image quality	16
design	17
value	17

85%

FUJIFILM FINEPIX S5600

quick view

PRICE £280

- **SENSOR** 1/2.5inch CCD (Total 5.2MP, Effective 5.1MP)
- **LENS** 38-380mm f/3.2-3.5
- **SHUTTER SPEEDS** 15-1/2000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, + 18 scene, ±2EV
- **ISO** Auto, 64-400
- **FLASH** Built-in, Auto plus 3 modes
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** EVF/ 2in 115,000 pixel LCD
- **OTHER** 640x480 15fps Video, xD SD Card plus 13.5MB internal
- **POWER** Lithium-ion cell
- **DIMENSIONS/ WEIGHT** 88 x 60 x 36.5mm/150g

5 mega pixels

top

The mode dial offers all the usual exposure modes plus Anti-blur mode and Natural light

front

The ribbed ring on the lens is not a zoom ring, but merely an extra level or grip. Do not try to twist it

side

The xD card port, USB and AV sockets and DC power in all sit on the left of the body

up against

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KONICA MINOLTA Z6

£300

scores

PROS: Image quality, handling

CONS: No RAW mode, oversharpening, no stabilisation

features	17
ease of use	17
image quality	17
design	17
value	18

86%

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WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

Fujifilm S5600

Joël Lacey tries out the 10x zooming 5MP Finepix S5600

Fujifilm is always trying to redefine what's what. First came the Super CCD numbers game, where 6MP became 12MP, but it wasn't interpolation as the pixels were octagonal!

The latest model to introduce us to a new way of looking at things we already know is the S5600. My linguistic bugbear with this model is two of its modes. The first is the anti-blur mode. This is what everyone else has been calling sports or action mode; the camera tries to select as fast a shutter speed as possible. Then there's natural light mode, where you can't turn the flash on. That would be flash off mode, then.

The S5600 is nicely specified. There's a shutter speed of 15-1/2000sec, a 38-380mm f/3.2-3.5 lens, a straight 5MP CCD and a range of focusing and metering modes and overrides to cover all situations.

Like one-man-one-vote, one-button-one-function is a liberating experience that the S5600 tries to provide as far as possible. The drive and exposure compensation buttons are just rear of the shutter release, which sits on a chunky and tactile grip with the power switch/play/record selection dial. Behind them is the mode dial with (linguistic interplay notwithstanding) clearly understandable settings on it. On the left of the top-plate is a lockable AF/MF button, while on the camera's back are buttons for display EVF/LCD selection, LCD brightness, zooming and the finepix button which gives access to three oft-used functions of ISO, resolution and chroma (colour saturation). Add in a four-way controller with a central menu button and that's it. Handling the camera, thanks to its well-thought-out ergonomics, is a doddle. Selecting functions and features is quickly done, and thanks to an informative display, easy to monitor too.

In performance terms there is very little to be concerned about, with exposures spot-on, focusing generally responsive and processing pretty speedy. There might be a touch too much going on in the sharpening stakes but you can change the standard setting to soft. In general, colours are vivid without being unnatural and the defocused elements of images are nicely rendered. Very fine detail did flake away slightly at maximum screen magnification, but you shouldn't notice that on a borderless A4 print once the printer's dithering has had its way. There's no RAW mode so the images you'll get as JPEGs is as good as you're going to get. Fortunately, that is really rather good.

VERDICT

This camera looks like an SLR. It handles very well and though I'm not normally a fan of superzoom compacts, the 5600's performance and ease of use has almost made a convert of me. It's not the best specified camera around and, short of a real anti-blurring mode that actually stabilised the 380mm maximum focal length, I can't see you'll miss anything that it lacks. **WDC**

LCD MONITOR
You can turn the LCD brightness up at the single touch of a single button for outdoor use, which is nice

AF/MF BUTTON
This button allows you to switch to manual focus mode, which is operated by pressing the exposure compensation button in conjunction with the zoom buttons

KODAK EASYSHARE V550

quick view

PRICE £300

- **CCD** Total 5.36MP, Effective5.0MP
- **LENS** 36-108mm Schneider-Kreuznach
- **SHUTTER SPEEDS** 8-1/1448sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto + 20 scene, Video
- **ISO** Auto, 80-800
- **FLASH** Built-in, 2.6-6m
- **VIEWFINDER/ MONITOR** OPT/2.5inch 230,000 pixel
- **OTHER** SD Card plus 32Mb internal, Camera Dock
- **POWER** Lithium-ion
- **DIMENSIONS/ WEIGHT** 94 x 56 x 22 mm/143g

5 mega pixels

Kodak Easyshare V550

How does the sleek V550 perform? **Jamie Harrison** finds out

Kodak is really making advances with its cameras. The older CX or DX Easyshare cameras were big, clunky, plastic and ugly. The V550 by contrast is slim, sleek and shiny. In terms of style it sits proudly alongside the best of the Sony, Canon or Fujifilm style models.

The V550 uses a Schneider-Kreuznach 36-108mm (equivalent) lens, accompanied by a sensor offering a 5MP resolution, or 2576x1932 pixels. So it seems to be a fairly standard 3x zoom 5MP model, similar to many other cameras around. Where it differs is its video capabilities, hence the V in the name.

It offers MPEG-4 recording, with unlimited recording for video with sound, dependent on the SD card size. It also offers the chance to print images from individual frames. Another couple of bonuses is video zoom, and digital image stabilisation to avoid the seasickness one usually feels when watching unsupported video footage. Unfortunately, you can really hear the zoom, and the focus mechanism too (which doesn't always focus either).

On the stills side though, the camera is an accomplished snapper. As well as auto and program AE modes, the V550 offers a comprehensive set of 15 scene modes. Surprisingly few are too esoteric; portrait et al are all present, along with a Text mode and Manners/museum mode, which keeps the camera quiet and turns the flash off. The 'buttons' to access the various scenes are built into the touch-top plate, that is, they are set into the top-plate rather than individual buttons on the top-plate. This, along with glowing blue lights, gives the camera its sleekness.

On the back is a 2.5in LCD, which is great for composing a scene but, as always, in bright light the screen becomes difficult to see. Thanks, then, for the viewfinder. The only trouble with the viewfinder is that, when you use it and zoom, you don't know when the digital zoom kicks in. An indicator is visible on the LCD, but not in the viewfinder, and because you can't turn digital zoom off, you could take low-resolution images, and you won't know it until you download them.

Unlike earlier Kodak compacts, the V550 doesn't over-process the images. They're sharp and well exposed, with saturated and vivid colours, though not overly so. In short they are pleasant, consumer oriented images – not strictly accurate, but ideal for the purpose.

Kodak EasyShare is about ease of use, and the V550 achieves that. The addition of a dock and the easy to use, and well-designed EasyShare software adds extra bonus points to the package.

VERDICT

The V550 is a continued step in the right direction for Kodak, it's smart, simple and effective. Unfortunately its selling point – the video mode – is a let down thanks to the zoom and focus noise. WDC

LCD MONITOR
Despite what manufacturers may tell us, Kodak has shown us that it is possible to have a small camera with a large LCD and still incorporate an optical viewfinder

MODE SWITCH
A small slider switch on the side allows you to change between record and review modes

top
The small camera is slimline with very low-profile buttons incorporated into the top-plate

front
Kodak has impressed us with the attractive, brushed metal design

side
Apart from a strap lug, there's not much to see on the side; all connections and the card slot are on the base

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

SANYO XACTI C5

£350

scores

PROS: Simple, good images

CONS: Video zoom noise, can't disable digital zoom, limited control, expensive

features	17
ease of use	17
image quality	16
design	17
value	16

83%

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Fujifilm

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CANON DIGITAL IXUS 750

quick view

PRICE £419

- **CCD** 1/1.8" 7.1MP effect/7.4MP Total
- **LENS** 37– 111mm f2.8-4.9
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 15– 1/2000 sec
- **ISO** Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P (manual), Auto, 9 scene modes
- **FLASH** 50cm-5m (W)/ 3m (T)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Optical/ 2.5-inch TFT 115,000 pixels
- **OTHER** SD/MMC, 5 photo effects, My colours, 640x480 30fps movies
- **POWER** Lithium-ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 89.5 x 57 x 27.4mm/170g

7 mega pixels

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

top

Surrounding the shutter is the optical zoom control, which you activate using your index finger

front

The optical viewfinder provides an alternative to the LCD screen

side

AV Out and USB connections are under a rather flimsy plastic flap; the wrist strap attaches to the strap eyelet

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

SONY DSC-P200

£300

scores

PROS: Fast operation, build

CONS: Limited manual features, some fragile components

features	16
ease of use	18
image quality	17
design	18
value	16

85%

see more on the web

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Canon IXUS 750

An elegant Canon compact impresses **Hannah Bouckley**

Taking its place at the head of Canon's stylish IXUS range is the 750, which – without wishing to sound like a luvvie – oozes class. Constructed from metal this well-built compact is undeniably attractive, featuring what Canon calls a 'Perpetual Curve' design and 3x optical zoom.

While the IXUS is compact enough to fit into a pocket, the controls on the back are fairly small and a little squashed, due to the dominance of the LCD at 2.5in. Canon has upped the dimensions since the IXUS 700, though the 115,0000-pixel resolution is fairly low. QuickBright and Night Display technology are designed to aid visibility in outdoor and indoor conditions, and despite the LCD struggling in some bright conditions, I found it functioned adequately. The optical viewfinder provides an alternative.

The IXUS is speedy, thanks to Canon's DIGIC II processor. Start-up is just under a second and we clocked shot-to-shot cycle times of just under 1.5secs for JPEG files taken at maximum size and quality.

Thanks to the relatively high pixel count of the CCD, the camera is capable of producing large prints: the maximum size of 3072x2304 pixels equates to 15x11.52 prints at a resolution of 200dpi.

Nine selectable scene modes include Fireworks, Foliage, Snow and Beach, and Stitch Assist makes it easy to create panoramas. Canon describes the 750 as having a 'Manual' exposure mode, but it isn't strictly full-manual; no adjustments can be made to the aperture and you can't select the shutter speed. The long and fast shutter speeds are accessible, though, using Long shutter and Kids & Pets mode. Adjustments can be made to white balance, metering and exposure compensation by hitting the 'Function' button.

In common with other Canon compacts the IXUS 750 includes a nine-point AiAF system, which detects and focuses on the subject. I found that it worked fairly quickly at wide and telephoto positions, though it didn't always focus exactly where I wanted. Focusing efficiency is less successful in macro mode; the closest focus distance is an ample 5cm, yet it often takes several attempts to lock onto the subject. However, results are pleasing, if a little soft.

Images are impressive, producing detailed, colourful pictures. It copes well with tricky exposures, although in high-contrast situations highlights can burn out and purple fringing is evident. Skin tones are very favourable and if colours are a little flat the Vivid filter provides an extra boost.

VERDICT

The 750 continues the quality tradition of the IXUS range: it is a fast, well-built point-and-shoot. My main criticism is the limited feature set. For the rather steep price it would be nice to get a little more creative with what is otherwise a great model. WDC

FOUR-WAY CONTROLLER

Adjust the flash, sensitivity, focus and drive mode in Record mode through the four-way controller, in Playback mode the up and down buttons access Jump and Delete commands

MODE DIAL

Flick the mode dial to swap between Manual, Automatic, Scene, Playback and Movie modes. Unfortunately the control doesn't feel securely attached to the unit

KODAK EASYSHARE P880

quick view

PRICE £450

8 mega pixels

- **SENSOR** 1/1.8inch CCD (Total 8.1MP, Effective8.0MP)
- **LENS** 24-140mm f/2.8-4.1
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 16-1/4000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** M, A, S, P, + 3 PIC + 8 Scene
- **ISO** Auto, 50-1600
- **FLASH** Built-in, Auto plus 3 modes
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** EVF / 2in 115,000 pixel TFT LCD
- **OTHER** 640x480 15fps Video, xD SD Card plus 13.5Mb internal
- **POWER** Lithium-ion cell
- **DIMENSIONS/ WEIGHT** 88 x 60 x 36.5mm/150g

top

The P880 has a slim top-plate but it still squeezes on eight controls including a mode dial

front

There's a focus assist lamp and external focusing window on the P880 above the 24-135mm lens

side

The side of the P880 has a PC socket for using external flashguns as well as an AV/USB socket and DC power in

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

PANASONIC FZ30

£430

scores

PROS: Great spec, useful focal length range, high resolution

CONS: Handling, noise in flat tonal areas even at ISO 50

features	18
ease of use	16
image quality	16
design	16
value	17

83%

see more on the web

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Kodak Easyshare P880

Joël Lacey tests Kodak's 8MP 'DSLR beater'

It's a brave company that withdraws from the high-end professional DLR market one week and then comes out with a pumped-up megazoom compact that it claims is more flexible than a digital SLR.

So a warm hello to the slimline mini-SLR-shaped P880, a 5.8x zoom-lensed 8MP camera.

It has a 1/1.8inch 8.1MP CCD, which delivers a maximum image resolution of 3264x2448 pixels, sufficient – assuming everything else is up to muster – for 16x12in prints. On the exposure side there's a broad shutter speed range of 16-1/4000sec, four metering patterns with both exposure compensation and exposure bracketing. There's a host of exposure modes including eight scene modes. There are also three multiple PIC modes (macro/supermacro, landscape/night landscape, portrait, night portrait/anti-shake night portrait) directly selectable with the topplate mode dial and then the backplate joystick. There are seven drive modes, five flash modes, 11 white balance settings, and a vast ISO sensitivity range. On the focusing side, there are three AF area modes, two AF shooting modes and manual focus, which uses the ring on the lens right by the camera body.

In terms of handling, the extended grip in which a chunky lithium-ion cell resides stands an inch proud of the front of the camera but is less than that in thickness. It is also very close to the lens. This is not ideal for those with chunky fingers, myself included, because you can bark the skin on your first knuckles of your right hand when the zoom ring is in action, and your nails on the focus ring when that is used.

Viewing is either by the electronic viewfinder whose eyepiece I found a little small for comfort, but which is well placed for getting a firm grip of the camera to the eye to reduce camera shake. It is however impossible to change any controls with your eye to the eyepiece, so that's better left to using the LCD.

The huge specification means the Kodak is bristling with buttons, virtually all of which have multiple menus. Though I really am not wild about the placement of many of the controls, the sheer depth of the camera's functions makes the P880 a less than point-and-shoot experience.

The P880's exposures are close to perfect, its focusing, though occasionally hesitant, was generally spot-on, and its click to capture time of 0.3 sec is not the slowest around by any means. There was some wicked barrel distortion at 24mm but this resolves itself by 35mm on the zoom.

However, like many of the 7 and 8MP chips around, this one flatters to deceive. You'll get nice borderless A4 shots, but at 16x12in, you'll see the odd blocking up of subtle tones. It's not clear whether this is a noise or an image-processing issue, but it is an issue.

VERDICT

The Easyshare P880 is very nearly an extraordinary camera except for the images it produces, which are really rather ordinary, and the handling, which can be time-consuming and frustrating. It's a real shame because the specification sheet and the price-point are both excellent. DSLR owners can breathe easily again, for now. **WDC**

SHARE BUTTON
Like many Kodak models, the P880 features a SHARE button, which allows you to tag in-camera those pictures you want to print or email later on

AF/MF BUTTON
This button allows you to switch to manual focus mode, which is operated by pressing the exposure compensation button in conjunction with the zoom buttons

NIKON COOLPIX S4

quick view

PRICE £329

- **CCD** 6.4MP (6.0 effective)
- **LENS** 38-380mm (equiv) f/3.5
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 2-1/1000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, 16 scene modes,
- **ISO** 50–400
- **FLASH** 3.0m/10ft
- **MONITOR** 2.5in LCD
- **OTHER** PictBridge, USB 2.0, 13MB int memory, SD cards
- **POWER** 2x Ni-MH AA (supplied) or 2xAA Alkaline
- **DIMENSIONS** 111.5 x 68.5 x 37mm
- **WEIGHT** 205g (without battery/SD card)

top

A three-position switch selects between auto, scene modes and 640x480 movies (15fps). The lens faces up when the camera is stored

front

The front view doesn't even have a lens – until you twist the camera body. A black finger rest aids handling

side

USB and SD card slots are on the right-hand side. There's nothing down the left side

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

OLYMPUS SP-500 UZ

£300

scores

PROS: Size, zoom range, performance, image quality, AA batteries (for some), price

CONS: No image stabilisation, no manual control, no viewfinder

features	16
ease of use	18
image quality	17
design	19
value	18

88%

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Nikon Coolpix S4

Is that a superzoom in your pocket or are you just pleased to see this? **Nigel Atherton** tries a compact with a twist

The popularity of superzooms – cameras with a zoom of 10x or more – proves that people like the idea of zooming in on distant subjects, even if they won't actually do it as much as they think they will. But the cameras are so unwieldy, with their protruding lenses, that many buyers opt instead for something more pocket-size.

The S4 achieves an extraordinary feat by satisfying both camps. Here's a camera with a 10x zoom lens (38-380mm equivalent), that will actually fit into the back pocket of a pair of jeans. I know because that's where I kept my review sample for much of the time – and until I went to sit down I forgot it was there.

Nikon managed this by reverting to its old swivel-body design. Not the awful inner swivel of the 2500/3500 models, but the good swivel of the hugely popular 990/995 series. A 10x zoom is, by nature, long. Cameras are generally taller than they are deep. So by turning the lens on its end so it pokes out of the top, and allowing that part of the body to swivel through 270°, you get both a slim camera (in its 'flat' position) and a camera which enables ground-level and overhead shooting with ease.

Other key features include a 6MP 1/2.5in CCD (for images up to 2816 x 2112 pixels), and a bright 2.5in LCD screen that's fairly visible in sunlight (just as well, as there's no viewfinder).

Though there are no manual modes, the 256-segment metering, linked to the multiple focusing points, produced barely a duff exposure in 200 shots. In addition to auto there are 16 scene modes, four of which offer 'frame assist' – which superimposes lines on-screen to aid composition. This may seem patronising, but it's amazing how many people place faces bang in the middle of the frame, for example. Speaking of faces, Face-Priority AF recognises (and focuses on) faces, then picks a wide aperture to blow the background nicely out of focus. The D-Lighting option is a bit like Photoshop's Shadow/Highlight control, boosting shadow and highlight detail in high-contrast, backlit or indoor flash shots (with varying degrees of success). Manually selectable, it saves the result as a copy.

The S4 has no on-board image stabilisation, but in low light, a wobbly hand icon warns of potential camera shake. If your picture does come out blurred the S4 tells you, and asks if you want to delete it. This is a great idea in theory, as you can't always tell on the LCD without enlarging it – though it isn't always reliable, especially with very slight or extreme blurring. However, I still managed to get sharp, handheld shots at near-maximum zoom on a damp late October afternoon simply by being careful.

The S4 is a delight to use. It's a tad plasticky, but still feels well-made, and it handles better than you'd expect. It's no slouch either, especially given its lens. The menu is clear (in icon or list view modes) and the results are very pleasing, with good colour, tone and detail, and only minor fringing and barrel distortion in certain circumstances. Battery life is more than acceptable too and, refreshingly, it takes two good old AA cells, making it an ideal backpacker's camera.

VERDICT

This is a cracking little camera. Nikon has managed to squeeze a quart into a pint pot with the S4, but without compromising on handling, responsiveness or image quality. If you're looking for a big zoom lens on a smallish camera, your search may be over. WDC

LENS
Rotates 270°, including backwards (for self-portraits) as well as up and down

FLASH
With the flash so close to the lens Red-Eye is an issue, but the S4 features an in-camera red-eye fix when processing

NAVIGATOR
The toggle switch takes up less space than a four-way controller, but is at least as easy to use

MONITOR
The 2.5in, 110,00 pixel LCD screen offers good visibility outdoors. The menu can be viewed either as a list or grid of icons

you can

Canon

Don't be afraid of the dark, it has so much potential. Whether it's a long exposure on a stairwell or a streak of car headlights, with a highly responsive DIGIC II processor and 100-1600 ISO speed range you have nothing to fear. **The EOS 350D. It's playtime.**
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KEY SPECIFICATIONS
SENSOR: Type, size and pixel count
LENS: Focal length (equivalent in 35mm terms) and maximum aperture
SHUTTER SPEEDS: Highest and lowest
EXPOSURE MODES: Choice of **Auto**, Program (**P**), Aperture Priority (**A**), Shutter Priority (**S**), Manual (**M**) and **Scene** modes
ISO: Sensitivity range of the sensor
FLASH: **G**uide **N**umber (metres@ ISO100)
VIEWFINDER/MONITOR: Type/ Size of LCD in inches
OPT = optical viewfinder
EVF = electronic viewfinder
OTHER: Additional key features.
Int = Internal memory. **CF/SD/ xD/MS** indicate media card type
POWER: Type of battery supplied

VERDICT
Our overall opinion of the camera

PRICE
Average street price at time of going to press, according to Pricerunner.co.uk. Prices may vary. **RRP** = Recommended Retail Price at camera launch

VIEWS
What the camera looks like from other angles, with description of key buttons and functions

UP AGAINST
Key competitors to the tested model in terms of price and specification

SCORES
How the camera scored in five key areas of assessment, out of a maximum of 20

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PROS & CONS
The camera's best and worst features

BACK VIEW
With explanation of key buttons and functions

FINAL SCORE
The overall score, derived from the total achieved in the five areas of assessment

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CHOOSING A DIGITAL CAMERA

Not sure what camera to buy? **Nigel Atherton** explains the differences between each type

Once, if you wanted to buy a digital camera you'd go for the one with the most megapixels. Now, even most sub-£100 models have more than enough pixels to make a photo-quality print so, except for professionals and enthusiasts for whom ultimate image quality is the Holy Grail, buying decisions should be based upon other factors.

Pixel counts are still rising, but more slowly than before, and prices are still dropping. In the pocket snapshooter market, cameras are getting thinner, LCD screens are getting bigger and viewfinders are disappearing altogether to make way for them. Zoom ranges of 10x or more are a growing niche, and image stabilisers are starting to spread beyond this sector and onto pocket cameras too.

Speed (or lack of it) was once an issue with digital compacts, but most are now at least as responsive as their 35mm counterparts. Built-in memory is making a comeback – with memory so cheap now, manufacturers are throwing in a few megabytes.

But the biggest story is the phenomenal growth of the digital SLR. This year has seen a flood of new models for around the £600 mark. This has sparked a DSLR boom as both 35mm SLR owners and compact users bitten by the bug trade up.

At the other end of the market, camera phones are snapping at the heels of the budget snapshooter, though they're still not at the stage when they can seriously challenge cameras aimed at the more discerning user. Yet. **WDC**

Basic Point *and Shoot*

If you just want to take nice snaps and you're not going to enlarge them much bigger than enprint size (6x4in), any model with at least 3 megapixels will suffice. More megapixels will allow you to crop into the shot and still get a good-quality print.

DO *Stick with the recognisable brands, handle the camera first, and check the speed and responsiveness of the camera. This is one area where budget cameras often fall down.*

DON'T *Spend much less than £100, buy obscure brands, or buy mail order without seeing and holding the camera.*

LOOK OUT FOR Canon A410, Fujifilm A345

TOP 10 *TIPS*

1 DON'T GET HUNG UP ON MEGAPIXELS
More pixels don't necessarily mean better pictures. To squeeze more onto a sensor they have to make the pixels smaller (or the sensor larger, making the camera bigger). Smaller pixels collect less light, which can result in more prominent image noise, and problems such as fringing. High-megapixel cameras produce bigger files, too, which means fewer shots per card, longer save and download times, more space on your hard drive, slower printing times etc.

2 SENSORS
If image quality is your most important consideration, bear in mind that a larger sensor is at least as important as the number of pixels it contains, so pay attention to the sensor size. Digital SLR cameras have larger sensors than compacts. Also, make sure that the camera can save images in the RAW file format.

3 BE LENS WISE
A long zoom lens may sound good but consider how often you will need to zoom in on distant subjects. You may find that a decent wideangle will come in handy more often. If you do want a superzoom bear in mind that it will be harder to hold steady at high magnifications. An image stabiliser will make it easier. Try the zoom. Is it smooth and precise, or slow and vague, or jerky and hard to control?

Lifestyle *Compact*

If you want to be the envy of your pals and look cool while taking pictures, then you need one of the slim, stylish models that we call 'lifestyle' cameras. Most are metal, fit in a shirt pocket and are at least 5 megapixels.

DO *Handle the camera. Many of these cameras lack a viewfinder and provide huge LCDs. Sometimes this leaves you nowhere to rest your thumb. Is it comfortable to hold? Also, some models come in a range of colours. If this appeals, then find out what colours are available, before you buy the one they have in the shop.*

DON'T *Be swayed by style over usability. Don't buy a camera without a viewfinder if you don't like using the LCD, or can't see it in bright light. Check it before buying.*

LOOK OUT FOR
Konica Minolta X1, Fujifilm Z1

All-weather *Compact*

If you're the outdoor type then you need a camera that can take whatever the weather throws at it, or you'll be constantly worrying about the camera getting wet or damaged. It isn't just rain you need to worry about. A weatherproof camera will also provide protection in snow, sand and other hostile conditions.

DO *Make sure the camera can stand up to what you plan to use it for. A weatherproof camera is okay for walking and light rain, but not white-water rafting. If this is your thing, buy a waterproof camera or invest in a housing or 'aquapak'.*

DON'T *Push your camera beyond its limits. Even most waterproof models can only generally be used to a couple of metres' depth – so, fine for snorkelling but not scuba diving.*

LOOK OUT FOR Most Olympus Mju models (weatherproof), Pentax Optio WP/WPi (waterproof to 2m)

Super *Zoom*

If you're into wildlife, sport or are simply a voyeur you'll probably want a camera with a long lens. The Superzoom category offers plenty of choice. Some models are almost as big as SLRs, and follow the same basic shape, others are much more compact.

DO *Handle the camera and try holding it steady at full zoom. How easy is it to use? Get a model with image stabilisation if you can afford it. This will reduce the risk of camera shake. Consider models with a manual zoom ring on the lens itself.*

DON'T *Overestimate how much you'll use a big zoom. Buy a large model if you want something for travelling, or that will go in a coat pocket.*

LOOK OUT FOR Nikon S4, Olympus SP-500

Enthusiast *Compact*

Ideal as a second camera for SLR users, or a replacement for former SLR users wishing to trade down to something smaller – or just those who like total control over their pictures. Enthusiast compacts contain virtually all the features found on an SLR, but in a smaller package.

DO *Handle the camera. Check the easy accessibility of main functions. Is there a button on the body for them, or do you have to fiddle about in the menu, wasting valuable time? Make sure it offers RAW shooting, for superior image quality.*

DON'T *Waste your money if it's just for snaps. These cameras have a steep learning curve if you don't already understand the features, and if you put it in the wrong mode by mistake you may struggle to figure out what you're doing wrong and correct it.*

LOOK OUT FOR Nikon 8400, Canon S70

>>

4 TRY BEFORE YOU BUY

First, decide what type of camera you want. Something small and pocketable or more substantial? Manual features or auto everything? Once you've decided on a type of camera, make a shortlist of models within your budget that fit the bill. Then visit your local dealer to try them. Do you like the way they look and feel? Do all the buttons make sense and fall easily to hand? Is the camera quick to respond when you focus, or press the shutter? Does it feel well built? Compare a couple of similar alternatives in the same price band before making your decision.

5 MONITORS AND VIEWFINDERS

Decide whether or not a viewfinder is important. Manufacturers are increasingly dropping them in favour of bigger LCDs. If you do want a viewfinder do you prefer optical or electronic types? Electronic viewfinders are like miniature TV monitors and have the benefit of showing you exactly how the camera will record your subject, with all the shooting data. But resolution is lower and it can be harder to see fine detail. If you're happy just using the LCD monitor, check that you can view it in sunlight.

6 THINK ABOUT A DSLR

If you're serious about pursuing photography as a long-term hobby consider a DSLR. Enthusiasts prefer them because they produce superior results, due to their larger pixels, superior lenses and processing. A 6MP DSLR will generally produce better results than a 6MP compact. The ability to change the lens, and add accessories such as external flashguns, means no subject is beyond reach.

>>

Electronic ViewFinder Cameras

Some of these are almost as big as a DSLR, with as many features, but they usually sport an electronic viewfinder (EVF) and lack the ability to change lenses. Bridge cameras are less popular than they once were, as DSLRs have come down in price, but they're still an option for some people who want a convenient all-in-one package.

DO *Think about why you'd want one of these instead of a DSLR. EVF cameras tend to be a bit smaller than DSLRs and are generally slightly cheaper. You also get a longer lens as standard, but they're less versatile than a DSLR. Make sure you're comfortable using an EVF and have no problems with viewing the image as a video feed through the viewfinder.*

DON'T *Invest in a bridge camera if you don't like EVFs, or there's any possibility of you wanting to later specialise in a genre such as macro, sport or wildlife, where you'll benefit from dedicated lenses.*

LOOK OUT FOR Panasonic FZ30, Fujifilm S9500, Sony H1

Single Lens Reflex Cameras

The best choice for image quality and versatility, digital SLRs can be expanded and customised for any type of subject, with dozens of specialised lenses, flashguns and other accessories available. They're also faster and more responsive than other types of camera. DSLRs are a bit more expensive than other types of camera but they're cheaper than they've ever been, and if you already have a 35mm system you can probably use your existing lenses (though they may not give the best results).

DO *Buy a DSLR if photography is a serious hobby for you, or is likely to become one. If you already have a 35mm system with a range of lenses, check out the same manufacturer's digital version so that you can still use your lenses.*

DON'T *Buy one if you just want to take holiday snaps.*

LOOK OUT FOR Canon A350, Nikon D70s

TOP 10 TIPS

7 KNOW YOUR CAMERA
Some cameras are easier to use than others. Some provide help menus that explain what each feature does. Subject or 'scene' modes optimise the camera for various shooting situations, such as portraits and action. Some cameras provide docking stations or 'cradles'. These stay attached to your PC, and will download your pictures and recharge the batteries when you place the camera into them and press a button. Most cameras also offer PictBridge, so you can print directly from most printers without needing a PC.

8 MEMORY
The card that comes with the camera is usually only good for a handful of pictures. For general shooting you'll need something bigger. Don't buy less than 128MB, and preferably 256MB or 512MB. If your camera is more than 5MP or shoots RAW files then go bigger still, with a 1GB card, or two smaller ones. Keep the one that came with the camera as a spare, just in case.

9 BATTERIES
The Lithium-Ion batteries that most cameras now use can be made in any size or shape, freeing designers to make models targeting all tastes. But if the battery goes flat, you won't find a replacement at the corner shop, so invest in a spare when you buy the camera. A few cameras still use AA cells, which are much easier to replace though they're bulkier and hold less charge than Li-Ions.

10 DON'T WORRY, BE HAPPY
Once you've decided on a camera, and made your purchase, don't worry that it will be superseded within months by a slicker, shinier model. That's just the way it is. If your new camera does what you want it to do, costs what you're prepared to pay and produces results that exceed your expectations, then that's all that counts.

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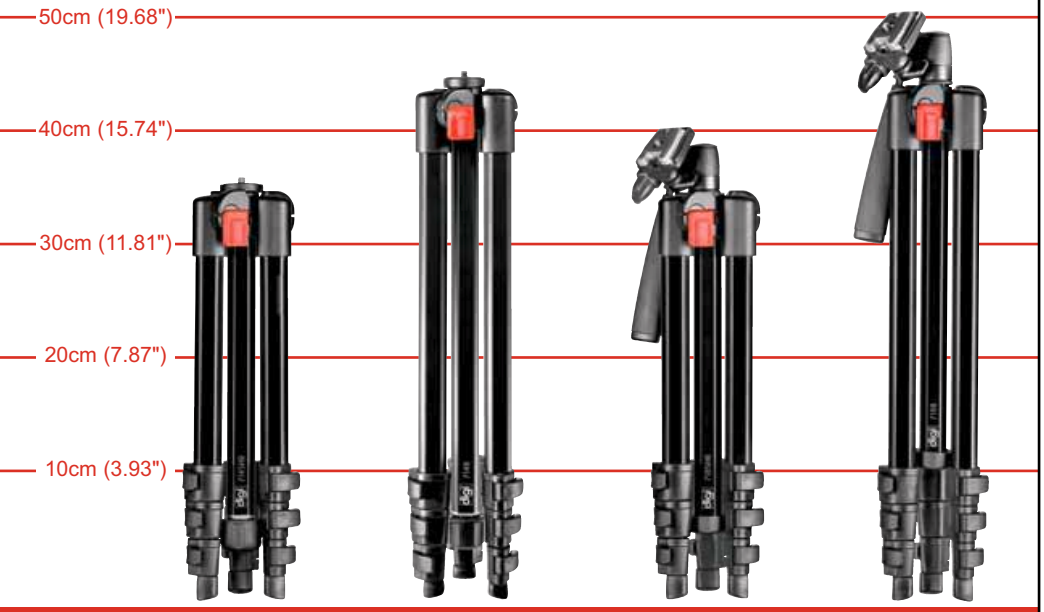

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HP PHOTOSMART M22

£90 Estimated Street Price

RRP £199

- **SENSOR** Total 4.1MP, Effective 4.05MP
- **LENS** 37mm f/2.8-6.5
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 15-1/1800sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P + 8 scene
- **ISO** Auto, 100-400
- **FLASH** Built-in, Auto plus 4 modes
- **VIEWFINDER/ MONITOR** None/1.5inch 61,600 pixel Active Matrix
- **OTHER** 320x240 24fps Video, SD/MMC, ±3EV
- **POWER** 2xAA
- **SIZE/WEIGHT** 96 x 29 x 49mm / 120g

4 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Ease of use, size

CONS: Limited features, slow, digital zoom only

TESTED OCTOBER 2005

features	14
ease of use	17
image quality	16
design	17
value	16

80%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

HP Photosmart M22

HP's pocketable M22 comes under scrutiny

HP has long been a name in digital imaging. The company has experience in scanners, printers and therefore optics and colour management.

This hasn't always translated into good looking, excellent quality cameras, though, particularly at the lower end of the company's range. The M22's specification is relatively simple and it looks stylish, although I'm not convinced that the satin finish will survive even mildly rough treatment. This HP is a bit of a rarity in today's market in that it doesn't offer an optical zoom, merely a selective cropping function. Displaying great honesty, the HP shows the pixel count dropping as you keep your thumb zooming in. At maximum zoom you get a throbbing 0.1, count'em, 0.1 megapixels in your image. In other words, really a triumph of hope over expectation in the image quality stakes.

At full whack, though, the image quality is rather good. It delivers smoother images than many other models of this price and is good on exposure and focusing, to a point. That point is the minimum focus of 20cm.

Ease of use is the name of the game and if you're looking for a simple-handling 4MP model, the M22 shouldn't disappoint. Using it is a thinkless task.

VERDICT

If you think you'll never need a zoom and are happy with little in the way of control, then the HP fills a no-nonsense niche. While limited, the M22 nevertheless delivers in image quality. **WDC**

OLYMPUS CAMEDIA C-370

£90 Estimated Street Price

RRP £120

- **CCD** 3.2MP effective
- **LENS** 38-114mm f/2.9 - f/5.0
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 2-1/2000sec
- **ISO** Auto 100-400
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, Prog AE, 4 scene
- **FLASH** GN 11
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** None/1.5in LCD
- **OTHER** xD, 320x240 movies, USB interface
- **POWER** 2x AA or NiMH rechargeable AAs
- **SIZE/WEIGHT** 87.5 x 62.5 x 38.5mm /140g

3 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Design, easy to use, great price, 2cm macro mode

CONS: No optical viewfinder, noisy images

TESTED APRIL 2005

features	13
ease of use	18
image quality	16
design	17
value	18

82%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Olympus Camedia C-370

The C-370 is a basic beauty

The C-370 is the little brother to the 4MP, C-470 but surprisingly it is not a 'clone'; it shares none of its bigger sibling's bodywork, although I'd guess it shares some of the innards.

It is a very basic, easy-to-use digital camera designed for the 'technophobe' and it is inexpensively priced.

It has help menus explaining each of the four scene settings that are picked from a neat mode dial that sits under the right thumb when in use. Settings provided are portrait, self-portrait, night scene and landscape modes. You can also get 320x240-pixel movies with sound to the limit of the xD Picture card's storage and a Program Auto exposure mode for true point-and-shootability. But the stand-out feature for me is the 2cm macro mode; it's cracking and works well. The 3x zoom lens provides a very reasonable 38-114mm focal range.

While PictBridge direct print support means you can print images without an intervening PC on compatible printers. The only annoying failing is it has no way to set up the camera for repeated use at the same mode; it always 'resets' back to the default settings.

Happily, picture quality is not bad at all – yes there's a fair amount of noise particularly in the blue channel, but this is not intrusive at all in prints at enprint (6x4in) size.

VERDICT

Stunningly easy to use, question marks over the image quality are unlikely to be an issue given the camera's cute pocketability and its price. **WDC**

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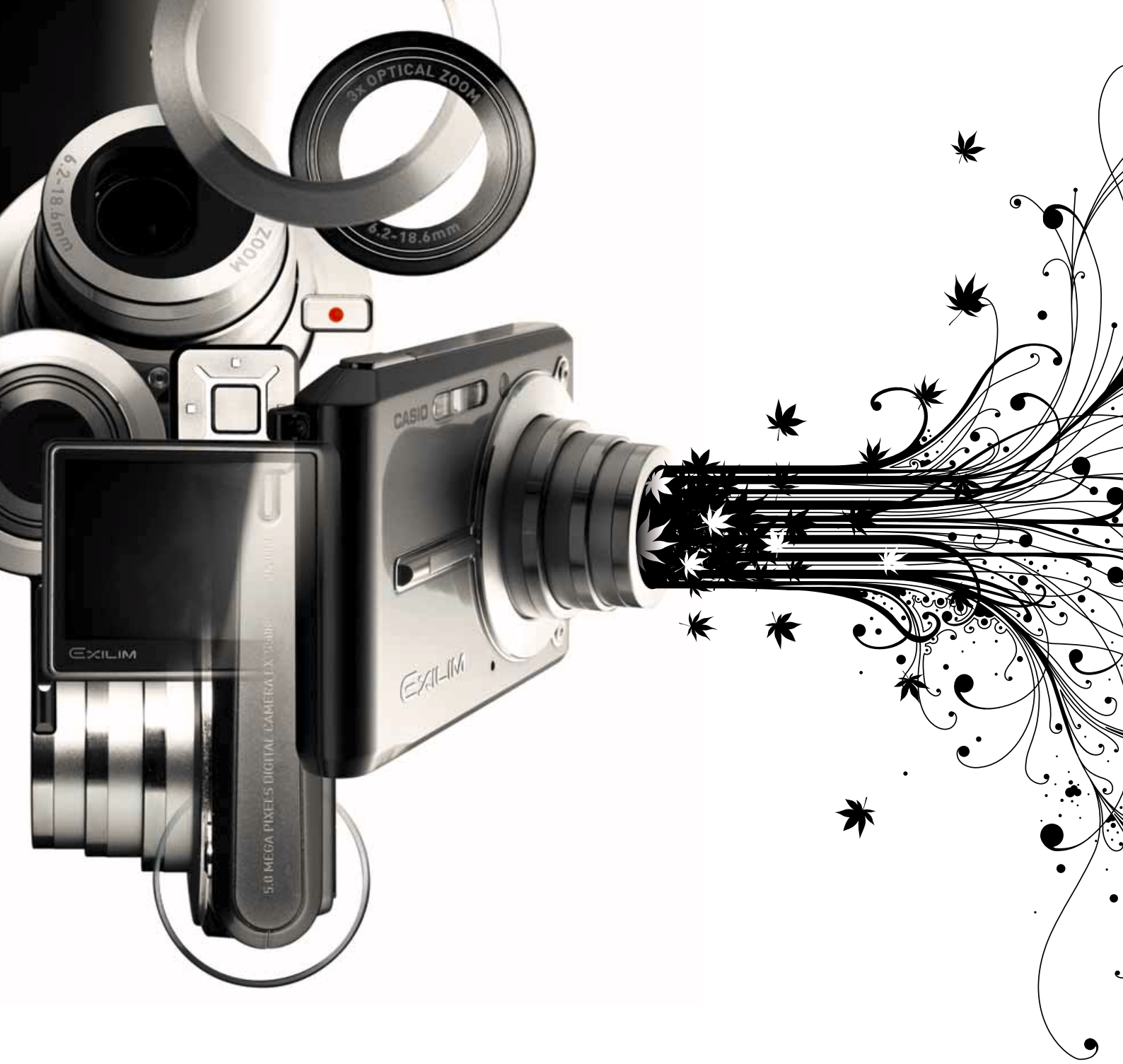

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CASIO

HP PHOTOSMART M417

£110 Estimated Street Price

RRP £110

- **CCD** 5.36MP total /5.19 MP effective
- **LENS** 36-108mm f/2.9-4.9
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 2-1/2000sec
- **ISO** Auto, 100-400
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P + 7 scene
- **FLASH** Built in
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** None/1.8inch 130,000 pixel Active Matrix
- **OTHER** 320x240 24fps Video, SD
- **POWER** 2xAA
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 96 x 29 x 49mm/120g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Resolution, AA batteries accepted
CONS: Unspectacular image quality, slow

TESTED OCTOBER 2005

features	16
ease of use	16
image quality	16
design	15
value	15

78%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

HP Photosmart M417

HP's chunky 5MP compact

You do wonder whether there's a machine at HP's head office that deals out random model names. This 3x optical zooming five-megapixel model is the M417. A near-identical M517 is also available with a larger LCD screen!

In addition to less-than-transparent naming, HP has a nasty tendency to 'big up' the digital zooming ability of its models. The M417 offers 7x digital zoom. Even 2x digital zooming is too much.

On other levels the M417 has what most point-and-shoot consumers want and need. It has a good range of shutter speeds, some user control, and an effective image-processing system using HP's Adaptive Lighting system. When it comes to how the camera performs in the field, the result is a bit of a curate's egg: good in parts. Exposures and colours are nicely rendered, but in action the camera can be painfully slow, and proves very hesitant in focusing terms too.

Image quality is not unpleasant (there was some highlight detail blown away in sunny situations) but nothing to write home about either, and bettered by many competitive models, some boasting less than 5MP resolution.

The lens is slow to zoom and pretty noisy to boot, and generally lacks finesse. In short, this feels like a camera made down to a price and not up to a specification.

VERDICT
Another OK but not stunning camera from the people who coined the word 'invent' as their mission statement. More work needed on that front if the M417 is anything to go by. **WDC**

NIKON COOLPIX 4600

£125 Estimated Street Price

RRP £149

- **CCD** 3.9MP eff
- **LENS** 34-102mm
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 4-1/3000sec
- **ISO** Auto
- **EXPOSURE** P, Sc, Mov, ±2EV
- **FLASH** Built in, GN 3.3m
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Optical/1.8in
- **OTHER** SD, 14MB internal, Best Shot Selector, auto and manual focus, USB
- **POWER** 2xAA
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 85 x 60 x 35mm/130g

4 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Simple to use, good price, punchy results
CONS: Too basic for some, difficulty resolving fine detail

TESTED MAY 2005

features	14
ease of use	18
image quality	16
design	15
value	18

81%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Nikon Coolpix 4600

Impressive, punchy images and a keen price

This is the first camera I can recall seeing with a Cyanotype mode. For those who don't know, cyanotype is a Victorian photographic process. So now we can shoot in sepia or as a cyanotype, just as great-granddad did. What's next, a daguerreotype mode?

Actually, the so-called cyanotype mode in the 4600 is a black & white mode in the colour menu that simply adds a blue tint to the image, much as the sepia mode adds a brown tint.

In most respects the Coolpix 4600 is a fairly bog-standard compact. A notable detail in the spec is the 1/3000sec fastest shutter speed. This is all the more remarkable considering many cameras at twice the price offer less than half the speed.

Most of the camera's operation is automatic, though. ISO, shutter apertures and so forth are all set by the on-board computer, while 16 scene modes allow you to optimise the Coolpix for different conditions. These make for an uncomplicated, no-nonsense camera whose images are warm, punchy and sharp; exactly the way a consumer camera should be. There are some problems resolving difficult details, but this certainly won't show on 6x4in prints.

VERDICT
A perfect camera for those who don't expect much more than good-looking holiday snaps and simple operation. **WDC**

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FUJIFILM FINEPIX E500

£130 Estimated Street Price

RRP £200

- **CCD** 4.1MP
- **LENS** 28-91mm f2.9-5.5
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 2-1/2000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, A, S, M, Auto, 4 scene modes
- **ISO** 80, 100, 200, 400
- **FLASH** 4.1m(W)-2.0m(T)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Optical/2.0" LCD
- **OTHER** PictBridge, USB 1.1, xD-Picture cards
- **POWER** 2x AA
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 101 x 60.5 x 32.6mm/225g

4 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Handling, features, price
CONS: Slow connection, purple fringing

TESTED FEBRUARY 2005

features	18
ease of use	16
image quality	14
design	18
value	16

82%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

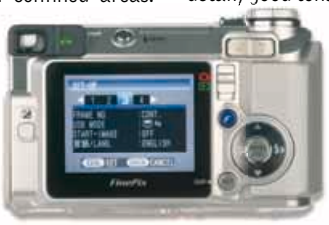
Fujifilm Finepix E500

The baby of Fuji's E series

The E500 is a fairly large, business-like 4-megapixel camera with a wide-angle 3x optical zoom lens.

This is its best feature, with a focal length of 4.7 to 15.1mm, equivalent to 28-91mm on a conventional camera. The extra wide-angle capability (most only start at 35mm) is a welcome bonus, ideal for landscape panoramas and large group shots in confined areas. The E500 has an impressive range of features, including aperture and shutter priority, manual exposure as well as program, portrait, landscape, action, night scene and movie modes. There are also two macro modes. The design and control layout shows an attention to ergonomics that is quite refreshing. The chunky handgrip is comfortable and the angled shutter release button well-placed.

Focusing is quick and precise, and copes well with low-light situations. Start-up time is about average for its class at 3 seconds, and shot-to-shot time is also well within the normal range. The only real let-down is image quality. Pictures are well-exposed, with plenty of detail, good tonal range and rich, well saturated colours, but they suffer from purple fringing – spoiling what would otherwise be an outstanding camera.



VERDICT
Superior handling, design and an outstanding list of features should make this a popular mid-range camera, but image quality is below average. **WDC**

PANASONIC LUMIX DMC-LZ1

£145 Estimated Street Price

RRP £200

- **CCD** 1/2.5-inch 4.2MP CCD, 4.0 MP effective
- **LENS** 37 – 222 mm f2.8-4.5
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 8 – 1/2000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Program, Scene modes, Mov
- **ISO** Auto, 64, 100, 200, 400
- **FLASH** Built in
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** None / 2.0in LCD
- **OTHER** SD, Image stabilisation
- **POWER** 2x AA (NiMH recommended)
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 101 x 64 x 33 mm/ 224g

4 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Zoom range, stabilisation, price
CONS: Focus can miss sometimes, low ISO

TESTED JUNE 2005

features	18
ease of use	18
image quality	17
design	17
value	18

88%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Panasonic Lumix DMC-LZ1

The LZ1 is a big lens on a small camera

The LZ1 is part of a pair, along with the LZ2, that has replaced the old LC range of cameras and packs in some interesting features.

There's 4MP resolution, a 6x zoom, image stabilisation, a 2in LCD and the revamped Venus Engine Plus processor. It claims to offer higher image quality and a faster shutter response. In fact it is quite a Speedy Gonzales, on the image-taking front. The AF is pretty nippy too, with a choice of automatic or selectable focus points.

An advantage of the Mega Optical Image Stabilisation is that in low light slower shutter speeds can be used without getting camera shake or at lower ISO settings, so there's less noise. Obviously the longer focal length of the zoom makes this stabilisation a basic requirement.

The exposure system is simple to use, with a choice of program and scene modes, which seem to handle most situations well, as does the white balance. Images are good, and an improvement on early LC models in terms of noise and sharpness.

Fringing can appear, but this is usually in high-contrast scenes and is still fairly well controlled. On small enprints, the standard size for this type of camera, the purple-edged effect is not visible.

VERDICT
The LZ1 pushes the specification and features that can be added to a 4MP camera into a new arena. **WDC**

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SAMSUNG U-CA 505

£145 Estimated Street Price

RRP £200

- **CCD** 5MP
- **LENS** 35mm
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 2-1/1000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, Prog, 5 Sc, Mov, ±2EV
- **ISO** 100, 200, 400
- **FLASH** 3m
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** None/2in LCD
- **OTHER** SD,16MB Int, Photoframe, PictBridge
- **POWER** 3V Lithium
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 97 x 52 x 23mm/110g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Size, LCD

CONS: Image quality

TESTED MARCH 2005

features	14
ease of use	16
image quality	14
design	15
value	14

73%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Samsung Digimax U-CA 505

Simplicity is the key to this camera

Samsung's entry-level five-megapixel model has some major competition for the money burning a hole in your pocket. Its major feature is its size, closely followed by an impressive 2in LCD screen.

The 505 falls short with its optics. The fixed 35mm lens is limited and the digital zoom that backs up the optics is, frankly, poor. This is not limited to the Samsung though; WDC has consistently found digital zoom to be detrimental to a picture's health – the 505 merely follows the trend and confirms the point.

The camera's raison d'etre is simplicity, with exposure limited to Program, Auto and five scene modes. There is also ±2EV exposure compensation, which you'll need, as pictures were generally underexposed. The ability to record movies with sound is a positive, as is the built-in audio recording. The menu system follows the simplicity of the rest of the camera's operation, with large type set against a bold, brash colour scheme. Among the options is a picture frame mode, which is fun, and colour options such as black & white. Thankfully, Samsung seems to have given up on the cartoon avatar and tinkly dance beats of yore.

Images are average, to be polite. They are prone to underexposure, and the lack of an optical viewfinder is also a contributing factor to a propensity to camera shake. Noise is also an issue, especially in low-ish light conditions.

VERDICT

There are plenty of cameras around at this price and lower. Even a 3MP model would prove a better buy. **WDC**

CANON POWERSHOT A520

£150 Estimated Street Price

RRP £239

- **CCD** 4.2MP Total, 4.0MP effective
- **LENS** 35-140mm f/2.6-5.5
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 15-1/2000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** M, A, S, P + 5 PIC modes, 8 scene modes
- **ISO** 50-400
- **FLASH** Built in
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Optical / 1.8" 115,000 pixel LCD monitor
- **OTHER** SD slot
- **POWER** 2xAA cells
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 91 x 64 x 38.5mm/180g

4 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Accomplished performer

CONS: Could be quicker and quieter

TESTED JULY 2005

features	17
ease of use	17
image quality	17
design	17
value	18

86%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Canon A520

DIGITAL CAMERA choice

The A520 has much to commend it

Compact but not tiny, slim but not thin, and light but not insubstantial. The A520 is a 4MP model with a 4x zoom lens equivalent to 35-140mm.

It has nine-point autofocusing as well as a manual focus option and a minimum focusing range of 5cm at the wideangle setting. Its shutter offers a range of 15-1/2000sec and an automatic noise-reduction feature kicks in at any exposure time over 1.3 seconds. Add in a 1.8inch 115,000pixel monitor, a choice of three metering modes with ±2 stops of exposure compensation. Storage is on SD memory cards and it is powered by two AA cells.

In addition, there are five main exposure modes, five picture image control modes, eight scene modes and a panoramic assist and movie mode. There's a lot you can change and you are rarely more than a couple of button pushes away from any control.

In terms of speed and noise, the camera manages to put in a reasonable performance. The zoom noise is audible but not distractingly so. The zooming, start-up and focusing speed are fast enough for most people's needs. The A520 produced a fine set of images, with focusing, metering and image processing all working well.

VERDICT

Much of the A520's most effective work is done without you being aware of it. It's not the fastest, but does what it does with professionalism. **WDC**

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HP PHOTOSMART R717

£150 Estimated Street Price

RRP £199

- **CCD** 1/8-inch 6.4MP CCD, 6.2 MP effective
- **LENS** 39-117mm f2.8-4.9
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 16 – 1/2000th sec
- **ISO** Auto, 50, 100, 200, 320
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, A, 10 scene modes
- **FLASH** Built in 5m (W) 2.8m (T)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Optical real image/ 1.8-inch 130,572 pixels LCD
- **OTHER** SD/MMC, 32Mb int, USB, 320 x 240 movies
- **POWER** Lithium-ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 98.5 x 35.3 x 60mm/180g

6 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Ease of use, Real Imaging technology
CONS: Limited macro mode, images lack punch, controls buried in menus

TESTED AUGUST 2005

features	17
ease of use	17
image quality	16
design	16
value	17

83%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

HP R717

With HP's Real Imaging Technology, will the R717 stand out?

The R717 includes a 6MP CCD, which should mean you can print up to about 14 x 11-inches at 200dpi. It's comfortable to hold and clearly marked. Many controls can only be accessed through the menu but the menu displays are split into colour-coded areas and the Help menu is especially useful.

At 2.5 seconds, start-up times are average. Using the R717 you do get a little frustrated with its sluggish operating speeds, particularly its processing, and it can be difficult to see whether a photograph is sharp on the LCD. The lens moves quickly between telephoto and wideangle, making precise control difficult, while results at the telephoto position can be soft. HP has included some useful features on the R717: namely AE Bracketing, Burst mode and a limited Aperture priority mode. What sets the R717 apart are Adaptive Lighting, Panorama Preview and In-camera Red-Eye Removal. Picture quality is satisfactory. Some shots appear a little over-processed and bright colours lacking punch. Purple fringing appears in high-contrast situations and noise is evident in the green and blue channels at ISO 50, becoming more evident in all channels at ISO 200 though images are still usable.

VERDICT

Easy to operate. Not the fastest model and can be cumbersome to handle. The quality of the pictures isn't world beating. However, thanks to the Real Imaging Technology, it packs in a lot of features. WDC

KODAK EASYSHARE Z700

£150 Estimated Street Price

RRP £179

- **SENSOR** 1/2.5in 4.1MP CCD
- **LENS** 35–175 mm f/2.8-4.8
- **SHUTTER SPEEDS** 8–1/6000sec
- **SHOOTING MODES** P, A, S, sport, landscape, close-up plus 13 scene
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Optical/ 1.6in
- **FLASH** Modes: auto, redeye reduction, fill-in, off
- **GUIDE NUMBER** 9.5m
- **POWER** 2CR-V3, 2xAA
- **OTHER** Storage SD, PictBridge, ±2.0 EV
- **DIMENSIONS/ WEIGHT** 94 x 72 x 54.5mm/ 219 g

4 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Great specification, at a great price
CONS: A bit lethargic, slightly blocky images

TESTED DECEMBER 2005

features	18
ease of use	15
image quality	15
design	15
value	19

82%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Kodak Easyshare Z700

Big zoom, big spec... moderate resolution

This 4MP model is very comprehensively specified for its price. The 5x optical zoom (35-175mm f/2.8-4.8) is complemented by a TTL centre-spot or multi-point autofocusing system. It has a 10cm minimum focusing distance and an MPEG 4 video (640x480 at 13fps) mode as well.

As for exposure modes, Program, Aperture priority, Shutter priority, Auto, Sports, Portrait and Macro modes are on the dial, plus you get an extra 15 scene modes. Shutter speeds run from 8-1/1600sec, and there are four metering patterns. 16Mb of internal memory complements the SD or MMC card and it's powered by two AA cells or a CRV-3 lithium cell. Finally on the spec side, it's compatible with the Easyshare Printer Dock 3 so you can print from the camera while recharging as well as downloading images to your PC.

On the handling side, the optical finder is not a TTL one but does give a clear bright view while the model's 1.6in monitor looks a little small compared with many on the market. The Z700 is not the speediest camera in the world to focus but it does so with some assurance. Image quality and performance are not quite on a par with its specification, but then that would be impressive for a sub-£200 model.

VERDICT

The Easyshare Z700 very nearly delivers as much with its performance as on its magnificent specification; very nearly, but not quite. WDC

The easy way to better pictures.

Graphire4 is a dream come true for amateur photographers.

One of major benefits of digital photography is that you can review a photo, immediately after taking it. Not the image you had hoped? Simply take another shot, at least in theory.
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With Graphire4, it's no longer a problem: By carefully and selectively using Graphire4, the sky suddenly regains its original brilliance, without spoiling the rest of the image. Simply click on the lighten function of your specific photo software (e.g. Adobe® Photoshop® Elements) and then, using the extremely intuitive pen, bring a little brightness to the sky. Graphire4 is quicker, more convenient and significantly more effective than using automatic photo enhancing filters. Improve contrasts, remove unwanted details, correct exposure problems, enhance colours and much more: Use the pen to edit your photos, only where it's really needed! – That's the easiest way to achieve great looking photos.

Graphire4 is available in four different versions for varying requirements: Studio is an all-in-one solution, incorporating a package of appropriate photo software, featuring Adobe® Photoshop® Elements 3.0 and nik Color Efex pro 2.0. The Graphire4 Classic pen tablet is compatible with all picture editing programs, allowing you to continue working with your usual photo software. Furthermore, a choice of two tablet sizes is available for all product versions.

Make pin-point corrections for even better photos! Problem solved with Graphire4 and photo software (e.g. Adobe® Photoshop® Elements)

graphire 4

1. An extremely eye-catching vacation snap of your young daughter - but wasn't the sky a little brighter than it appears in the photo?

Simply select the lighten tool and bring a little light to the sky using the pen.

2. It looks better already, although it would look even nicer if the dog wasn't in the way.

By using the pen together with the clone function you can simply copy the colour and texture of the surrounding background, and then just paint over the unwanted object.

Pen tablets reflect the latest trends. This is primarily due to their sheer versatility: Those who switch to using tablets soon realize that they are far more than a quick, highly precise and extremely ergonomic navigation device.
Pen tablets first became popular in photo studios and advertising agencies, and not without good cause. It wasn't long before the pen tablet caught on in all businesses whose work involved editing images and graphics with optimal precision and under significant time pressure, like advertising agencies and photo studios.
Tablets, optimized for image processing, are now available to individual users such as amateur photographers. They're easy-to-use, extremely affordable and are available with an optional package of perfectly tailored imaging software, which makes light work of editing your private photos.

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OLYMPUS CAMEDIA C-470

£150 Estimated Street Price

RRP £200

4 mega pixels

- **CCD** 4.0 Million Effective Pixels
- **LENS** 35 - 105mm f/3.1 – f/5.2
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 1/2 – 1/1000th sec
- **ISO** 64, 250, 500 automatically selected
- **EXPOSURE** Auto, Program AE, 8 scene modes, Mov(320x240) with sound
- **FLASH** GN 11
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** None/1.8in
- **OTHER** xD (16MB card supplied), Digital ESP metering, USB interface
- **POWER** LI-12B Li-ion rechargeable pack
- **SIZE/WEIGHT** 108 x 51 x 27mm/159g

scores

PROS: Design, simple to use, great colour capture
CONS: No optical viewfinder, overprocessing

TESTED APRIL 2005

features	14
ease of use	18
image quality	16
design	17
value	17

82%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Olympus C-470

We test this 4MP, 3x zoom digital compact

The C-470 Zoom offers a good specification for a great price. Spec includes a 4MP sensor, 3x optical zoom with a 35-105mm range and a 1.8in LCD of the 'Sunshine' variety – it reflects light entering it, so the brighter the light the more the LCD brightens to compensate. So it is claimed.

Movie recording with sound, along with eight scene modes including portrait, landscape, an indoor and cuisine mode, boost shooting options while PictBridge direct printing capability is available with compatible printers. Storage is of the xD Picture Card variety.

Handling is summed up in one word: simple. However, a predominantly menu-driven camera lacks spontaneity and the lack of an optical viewfinder means all composition goes through the colour screen. While that saves space (and presumably helps hold down the price) it means you place a greater burden on the camera's rechargeable battery pack.

Olympus' TruePic TURBO processing helps to speed up the processing but auto-only sensitivity leaves no user control in low light; noise becomes an issue for shots indoors or in low light as the ISO gets boosted. Colour capture is good, although highlights lose detail slightly and reveal a hint of blue pixel fringing. The one major bugbear is overprocessing. Images seem to have detail smoothed away, even in the top, Super High Quality JPEG setting, making the 4MP resolution redundant. This is very irksome if detail is what you want for a larger print.

VERDICT
The compact, inexpensive C-470 brings 4MP resolution to the masses but it lacks some picture-taking panache. **WDC**

PENTAX OPTIO S50

£160 Estimated Street Price

RRP £200

5 mega pixels

- **CCD** 5.36MP total; 5MP eff
- **LENS** 35.6-107mm f/2.6-4.8 (3xzm)
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 4-1/2000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, three scene plus 10 PICT modes, Auto
- **ISO** Automatic, ISO 50-400
- **FLASH** GN 9.5
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Real-image optical finder / 1.8inch 85,000 pixel TFT LCD
- **OTHER** SD card, 30fps movies
- **POWER** 2xAA cell
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 89 x 58.5 x 36mm/130g

scores

PROS: Neat styling, good image quality, price
CONS: 2AA cells don't last terribly long

TESTED JANUARY 2005

features	16
ease of use	16
image quality	16
design	17
value	18

83%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Pentax Optio S50

Pentax's slim-line 5MP model is packed with features

The 3x zooming S50 is suprisingly slim but it still has plenty to recommend it, including a program mode, three subject programs (Portrait, Night portrait, Landscape) and 10 scene (PICT) modes including text, snow, and sunset.

The optical viewfinder is rather small for comfort, but the LCD is easy to view, and in playback mode displays comprehensive information about an image you've just shot (including a histogram).

The menu button gives access to all manner of settings including, usefully, the ability to customise which four functions will be accessed by the four-way arrows when the FN button is pressed. Each of the four can be chosen from one of 11 options.

In terms of handling you can select focus modes, drive modes and flash modes without entering a menu, and select focus areas, metering patterns, white balance, saturation and sharpening if you do. The S50 also allows you to just point and shoot as well, and the panorama assist feature is particularly sophistcated. I'd have liked the option of a lithium-ion rechargeable cell as well as AAs and CRV3s, though. Performance-wise, focusing is crisp and quick and the zooming function is easy to control. Exposures can tend to be a tad dark but noise is well controlled.

VERDICT
Though slightly limited in terms of overrides, the S50 delivers the goods in all but very low light levels: images are well balanced with excellent colour. **WDC**

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SONY DSC W17

- 7.2 Mega Pixel
- 3x Carl Zeiss optical zoom

£269
Inc 256Mb card

NIKON Coolpix P2

- 5 Mega Pixel
- 3.5x optical zoom
- 2.5" LCD

£239

NIKON Coolpix 4800

- 4 Mega Pixel
- 8x optical zoom

£209
Inc 256Mb card

OLYMPUS MJU 600

- 6 Mega Pixel
- 3x optical zoom
- 2.5" screen

£179

PANASONIC DMC FX9

- 6 Mega Pixel
- 3x optical zoom
- Image stabiliser

£269

SONY DSC W15

- 5.1 Mega Pixel
- 3x Carl Zeiss optical zoom
- Large 2.5" LCD screen

£249
Inc 256Mb card

OLYMPUS Camedia C470

- 4.0 Mega Pixel
- 3x optical zoom

£119
Inc 128Mb card

SONY DSC T33

- 5 Mega pixel
- 3x optical zoom

£259
Inc 256Mb card

SONY DSC R1

- 10.3 Mega pixel
- 24-120mm Carl Zeiss lens
- Free angle LCD screen

£POA

SONY DSC S80

- 5.0 mega pixel
- 3x optical zoom

£199
Inc 256Mb card

NIKON Coolpix 7900

- 7.1 Mega Pixel
- 3x optical zoom

£299
Inc 256Mb card

KONICA MINOLTA D'Image Z6

- 6.0 Mega Pixel
- 10x optical zoom
- Anti shake

£299
Inc 256Mb card

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£475

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- 3x optical zoom
- Inc FP-30 printer

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PANASONIC DMC LZ1

- 4.0 Mega Pixel
- 6x optical zoom
- Image stabiliser

£189
Inc 128Mb card

PENTAX ist* DL

- 6.0 Mega Pixel
- Digital SLR

£549

SONY DSC S90

- 5.0 Mega Pixel
- 2.5" screen

£205 Inc 256Mb Pro card

OLYMPUS Camedia C55

- 5.1 Mega Pixel
- 5x optical zoom
- 2" LCD

£140

OLYMPUS Camedia C170

- 4.0 Mega Pixel
- 1.5" LCD

£59

SONY DSC W7

- 7.2 Mega Pixel
- 3x optical zoom

£259
Inc 256Mb card

OLYMPUS mju mini

- 5 Mega Pixel
- 2x optical zoom

£99
Demonstration models

PANSONIC DMC LZ2

- 5 Mega Pixel
- 6x optical zoom
- Image stabiliser

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Inc 128Mb card

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KONICA MINOLTA DIMAGE X50

£170 Estimated Street Price

RRP £300

- **CCD** 5.4MP total (5.1MP effective)
- **LENS** 37-105mm f/2.8-5
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 4-1/1000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, Auto, 7 scene modes, movie
- **ISO** Auto ISO 50-160, 50, 100, 200, 400
- **FLASH** Built-in flash, GN7m
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Optical real-image zoom finder/2.0inch TFT
- **OTHER** Movie recording at 320x240 pixels 30 or 15fps with sound
- **POWER** Lith-ion 3.7V 660mAh rechargeable cell
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 83.5 x 62 x 23.5mm/125g

scores

PROS: Good design, excellent macro
CONS: LCD screen a bit grainy

TESTED FEBRUARY 2005

features	14
ease of use	17
image quality	17
design	18
value	17

83%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

5 mega pixels

Konica Minolta X50

Learn to let go with the dinky 5MP Dimage X50

The X-series from Konica Minolta has a lot of fans. They have sophisticated-looking, sturdily built bodies, and ingeniously designed lenses that together deliver good-quality pictures without too much being required in the manner of user-input.

The X50 is certainly sophisticated, but its idea of user overrides is, in the exposure field, for example, a choice of two metering patterns and the exposure compensation function. It does what it does very well indeed. I liked its supermacro function, although I can't see why it has to be hidden away as a special subject program mode. Exposures are excellent, the focusing is quick and almost always spot-on. This is just as well because from the exposure point of view, the only information you get is how the image looks on the LCD and, in low-light, a camera shake warning.

There's no method of creatively adjusting the balance between aperture and shutter speed and at no time until you get the image onto a computer equipped with software capable of reading EXIF data can you really tell if the shutter speed was what you wanted.

It takes a while to get used to this hands-off approach, much like learning to drive an automatic car – you have to learn not to keep your foot off the clutch. Once you have mentally set yourself to cruise control, the X50 starts to do what it's designed for: capturing images quickly and effectively.

VERDICT
Easy to use, delightfully designed camera that delivers good-quality pictures. WDC

KONICA MINOLTA DIMAGE X60

£170 Estimated Street Price

RRP £229

- **CCD** 1/2.5" 5.4MP total / 5.0 MP effective
- **LENS** 38-114mm f/3.3 – 4.0
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 4-1/1000 sec
- **ISO** Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, P, 6 scene modes
- **FLASH** Built in
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** None/2.5-inch TFT Colour monitor
- **OTHER** 15Mb internal memory, SD, 3 filters
- **POWER** Li-ion cell
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT:** 83.5x56x22mm/115g

scores

PROS: Large LCD screen, fast start
CONS: Limited features, image noise

TESTED SEPTEMBER 2005

features	16
ease of use	17
image quality	17
design	17
value	16

83%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

5 mega pixels

Konica Minolta X60

Like the X50, only sturdier and with a big screen

The X60 is a tough little camera, although the card door feels weak. The LCD screen has increased in size from 2in to 2.5in and the optical viewfinder has been removed, compared with the X50. The limited space around the back makes it easy to accidentally hit the up-arrow command.

As with many digicams, viewing the LCD in bright sunlight can be tricky, but the brightness control does improve things.

Slide back the lens cover and in less than a second you can take a photograph, which, when the X60 was launched, was the fastest in its class. The 38-114mm lens offers an optical zooming capacity more in line with its competitors.

Manual modes are limited on the Dimage; adjustments can be made to exposure compensation, sensitivity, metering and white balance, but not the aperture or shutter. Use the scene modes for situations when you need to use a fast or slow shutter.

In image quality terms, edges are sharp and images display plenty of detail. Noise is evident at ISO 200 in all channels, increasing at ISO 400. Metering is not 100% accurate: bright areas are well exposed, but shadow areas can be underexposed.

VERDICT
The X60's features are very limited; however it is quick, easy to operate and capable of decent images. WDC

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Panasonic Lumix DMC-FX8 with Optical Image Stabiliser (O.I.S.)

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* The LEICA DC VARIO-ELMARIT lens is manufactured using measurement instruments and a quality assurance system that have been certified by Leica Camera AG based on the company's quality standards. ** O.I.S. images are simulated.

NIKON COOLPIX 5900

£170 Estimated Street Price

RRP £299

- **SENSOR** 1/1.8inch CCD (Total 5.26MP, Eff 5.1MP)
- **LENS** 38-114mm f/2.8-4.9
- **SHUTTER SPEEDS** 4-1/2000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, + 18 scene, ±2EV
- **ISO** Auto, 64-400
- **FLASH** Built-in, Auto plus 3 modes
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** None/ 2in LCD
- **OTHER** 640x480 15fps Video, xD SD Card plus 13.5Mb internal
- **POWER** Lithium ion cell
- **DIMENSIONS/ WEIGHT** 88 x 60 x 36.5mm/150g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Ease of use for the less-experienced user

CONS: A little prone to camera shake

TESTED NOVEMBER 2005

features	17
ease of use	17
image quality	17
design	16
value	18

85%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Nikon 5900

A D-Lightful Coolpix compact model

Nikon's D-Lighting system rescues underexposed images – in camera – without the need for a PC, which is an admirable function.

The 5MP Coolpix 5900 has a 3x zoom, and an array of exposure and focusing modes. On the latter front it gives the choice of a five-area AF, or a choice of any one of 99 manually selected focus points.

On the exposure side there's a 256-area matrix metering mode as well as centre-weighted average and spot metering modes. Even with all these functions, a digital camera can still underexpose, and that's why Nikon provides the D-Lighting system as a means of overcoming it.

The 5900 can seem a bit complicated in terms of the amount of information displayed on the 2in screen, but in practice it's a doddle to use. With admirable honesty, the 5900 tells you that your images have camera shake and asks if you want to keep them. The mixture of dial, buttons and menus keeps the clutter down and helps speed of access for important functions – it shouldn't take the new user long to tame the essential functions.

In performance terms, the 5900 nearly lives up to the promise offered by its specification and handling. It tends to err a little too much on the dark side from an exposure point of view in fully auto mode. Focusing and image processing are very confidently handled.

VERDICT

An almost perfect example of a simple camera that can grow with the user as he or she becomes more confident. WDC

OLYMPUS MJU MINI S

£170 Estimated Street Price

RRP £250

- **CCD** 5.4 MP total/5MP eff
- **LENS** 35-70mm
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 1/2 – 1/1000sec
- **ISO** Auto 64 – 400
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Program, Sc, Mov
- **FLASH GN** 5.4m
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** None/ 1.8in LCD
- **OTHER** xD, Histogram, 3 colours
- **POWER** Li-Ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 95 x 55.5 x 27.5mm/115g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Black finish very tactile

CONS: Images better than expected but still not perfect

TESTED JULY 2005

features	16
ease of use	17
image quality	16
design	18
value	15

82%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Olympus Mju Mini S

Olympus's 5MP mini adventure

Despite a radical design, leading to startlingly distinctive good looks, the original 4MP mju mini was a disappointment. Image quality failed to live up to the company's good reputation.

Olympus now has another model, the Mini S. The camera is available in a variety of shades and finishes; our test was carried out on the Enamel Black model. Much of the criticism of the original mju mini is made redundant by this model, which has a more tactile and secure finish, less likely to slip from sweaty fingertips.

The menu system is Olympus-like and user-friendly. Spec-wise the 2x zoom, which is hidden behind a round lens cover, seems a little underwhelming these days. There's still no optical viewfinder either, which is always dispappointing but alas, such is the way of the world.

Images are slightly better than those of the mju mini, with fewer of the false edges of the original, though colour is a little over-saturated for my liking. In use the camera is snappy and happy to accommodate, with both a built-in flash and Olympus' supermacro mode adding to the mix. Of course, 5MP will usually win out over 4MP, but the sensor still has problems with medium to high contrast, and struggles to maintain detail. However the 6x4in inkjet prints I made are perfectly usable, just don't expect to go too much bigger before the inherent faults start to be picked up by eagle-eyed viewers.

VERDICT

Style over substance the mju mini S may be, but images are adequate and there's a handful of decent features. WDC

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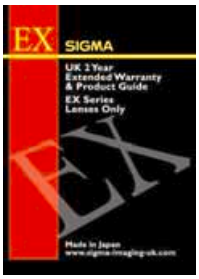
ED KASHI: Born in 1957 in New York. Earned a degree in photojournalism at Syracuse University. Photographed in more than 60 countries. Received numerous awards for a wide range of work. Photographs appeared in National Geographic magazine, among many other publications. Photo data: SIGMA 10-20mm F4-5.6 EX DC HSM, 1/250 second exposure at f13.

ED KASHI SHOOTS THE WORLD WITH A SIGMA LENS



The ultra-wide angle capabilities of this Sigma lens open up new possibilities to digital photographers. The image circle of the lens is specially designed to suit digital SLRs with APS-C size sensors. Special Low Dispersion (SLD) glass and aspheric lens elements correct aberrations for clear, distinctive image quality at all times and allows a minimum focusing distance of 24cm (9.4inches) throughout the entire zoom range. The Hyper Sonic Motor (HSM) provides silent, responsive auto-focus with full-time manual focus override. This compact lens is finished to advanced EX standards and comes complete with a matched petal-shaped lens hood.

FOR DIGITAL

This affordable, extraordinary ultra-wide-angle zoom lens will transform your photography.

SIGMA 10-20mm F4-5.6 EX DC HSM

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SAMSUNG DIGIMAX L50

£170 Estimated Street Price

RRP £200

- **CCD** 5MP effective/5.36MP Total
- **LENS** 39 -109.2mm f3.2-5.4
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 15– 1/2000 sec
- **ISO** Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, P, 11 scene
- **FLASH** 0.2.5m –2.0m (W) / 0.3–1.5m (T)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** n/a/ 2.5-inch TFT 230,000 pixels
- **OTHER** SD, 26MB int, 30fps movie with stabiliser
- **POWER** Lithium-ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 93.3 x 52.1 x 22.3mm/120g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: LCD size, lightweight
CONS: Menu is not very user-friendly

TESTED DECEMBER 2005

features	17
ease of use	16
image quality	16
design	17
value	18

84%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Samsung Digimax L50

This 5MP model is good but not very user friendly

An attractive, lightweight aluminium camera, the L50 sits comfortably in the hand. There is no viewfinder; instead the 2.5in LCD, composed of an impressive 230,000 pixels, dominates the back. Optically, the lens has a slightly shorter focal length range than some rivals.

Using a central focus point, focusing is satisfactory – if not lightning quick – at wide and telephoto positions. Macro mode produces decent results, but only gets you as close as a disappointing 10cm from the subject.

Start-up is fairly quick; hold down the power button and you can take your first shot in just over 2 secs, and using a fast 256MB card we clocked 5MP shot cycle times of around 2.5secs.

There are enough features to keep a casual user happy. You can choose from program and auto modes or one of 11 scene modes. The L50 can also capture movies at 30fps and 15fps up to 640x480pixels using MPEG-4 compression, and a movie stabiliser reduces shake. White balance, ISO, exposure compensation and colour channels can be adjusted on screen in manual mode, and multi and spot metering commands are available in the menu. There's a selection of in-camera effects including colour filters, to let you perform some basic manipulations too.

VERDICT
The L50 is a nice point-and-shoot, producing pleasing photographs, though ISO 200 is very noisy. It is not particularly user-friendly; the abundance of menus means it takes a while before you feel confident using the camera. **WDC**

CANON DIGITAL IXUS 40

£175 Estimated Street Price

RRP £350

- **CCD** 4MP CCD
- **LENS** 35 - 105mm f/2.8 – f/4.9
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 15 – 1/1500th sec
- **ISO** Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400 ISO
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto ,P,M +7 scene
- **FLASH** GN 11
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Real-image optical/2in LCD
- **OTHER** SD/MMC, 640x480 30fps
- **POWER** Li-ion rechargeable battery pack
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 86 53x20.7mm/130g

4 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Excellent image quality, metering and AF, manual control
CONS: Blurred viewfinder, weak memory card-bay cover

TESTED APRIL 2005

features	18
ease of use	16
image quality	18
design	18
value	16

86%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Canon Digital Ixus 40

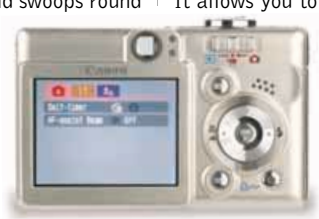
It's small but does the business

The IXUS 40 features Ultra-high Refractive Index Glass Moulded (GMo) Aspherical elements which achieve high-resolution and good contrast, while keeping its small design.

Build quality is also very good for such a small model. It's attractively designed with style elements like the knurled lens ring and chromed band 'wrap' that starts at the on/off button on the top and swoops round the body's outer edge to its SD/MMC storage and battery compartment.

Specification includes 9-point AiAF (Artificial Intelligence AF), making sure even off-centre subjects are kept pin sharp. The LCD is clean and sharp and backed up by an optical viewfinder which lacks a dioptre adjustment.

Intelligent Scene Analysis based on Photographic Space (or iSAPS, for short) handles metering. It works extremely well, making this camera ideal for those wanting an ultra-pocketable snapper. Image processing is carried out by Canon's fast DIGIC II 'engine'. You can capture movies with mono sound and up to the limit of the storage at 640x480-pixel resolution. It allows you to edit the movies in-camera and there's even a boosted 60fps frame rate movie mode too, for fast-moving action.



VERDICT
Small and stylish. Great pictures thanks to a superb metering and AF set-up. Appealing to both beginners and those requiring a bit more. **WDC**

IN ASSOCIATION WITH JESSOPS

SIGMA

OUR WORLD

Natural expressions transcend cultural distinctions.
FENG XUEMIN: Born 1953, Shanghai. Came to Japan in 1985 as a researcher sponsored by the Chinese News & Publication Association. Exhibited his photographs extensively throughout Japan, China, the United States, Canada, and France since 1986. Received the 36th Taiyo Award in 1999, becoming the first non-Japanese so honoured. Awarded the gold prize at the World Chinese Art Exhibition in 2000.
Photo data: SIGMA 18-50mm F2.8 EX DC lens. Exposed for 1/100 second at f/8.

FENG XUEMIN SHOOTS THE WORLD WITH A SIGMA LENS

Distinctive traditions enliven the rich cultural tapestry of China's Guizhou Province. The photographer captured this slice of village life with SIGMA's light, compact, large-aperture F2.8 standard zoom lens specially designed for digital SLR cameras. A special low dispersion (SLD) lens and two aspherical lens elements are optimally positioned, according to the power of the lens, to correct all types of aberration. Chromatic aberration, that tends to occur with digital cameras, is kept to an absolute minimum by these elements. Minimum focusing distance is 28cm throughout the entire zoom range. With its inner focusing system, this lens is particularly suitable for using a petal-shaped lens hood and circular polarizing filters.
*Vignetting (a darkening of the corners of the image) will occur if the lens is used with digital SLR cameras with image sensors larger than APS-C size or 35mm SLRs and APS SLRs.

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SIGMA 18-50mm F2.8 EX DC

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www.sigma-imaging-uk.com E-mail: sales@sigma-imaging-uk.com

CASIO EXILIM S100

£180 Estimated Street Price

RRP £350

- **CCD** 3.2MP effective
- **LENS** 36-102mm f/4-6.6
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 4-1/2000sec
- **ISO** 50/100/200/400
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Program AE, Mov, Sc
- **FLASH** 0.4-2.5m
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** None/ 2" LCD
- **OTHER** 9MB Internal memory, SD, clock/ alarm, ceramic lens, USB Dock, JPEG
- **POWER** Li-Ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 88x57x16.7mm/113g

3 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Sharp images, LCD, features, size, speed
CONS: Fiddly handling, SD card issues, camera shake

TESTED JANUARY 2005

features	18
ease of use	16
image quality	16
design	16
value	16

82%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Casio S100

The pocket-sized Exilim S100 is quick off the blocks

Billed at its launch as the world's smallest camera with an optical zoom, the S100 is even more of a 'card cam' than previous models.

This is mainly due to the lens, which is 20% smaller than usual because it's made of 'Lumicera', a transparent ceramic, that allows thinner optics than glass.

While the S100 fits easily in a pocket, the power button is tiny, the other buttons not much bigger and there is always a problem with holding it properly, more so with its shiny, slippery shell. Start up is almost instantaneous and the shutter button is on a hair trigger. In fact, this is one of the fastest cameras I can recall testing.

The camera has a full range of digital controls, Casio's Best Shot extended scene mode function, and on-board album creation, to name a few. It also comes with a docking station, as this is the only means of recharging and downloading images to the PC.

For a 3MP cardcam, the S100 is remarkably adept. Images are sharp and colourful, though often a bit underexposed. With no viewfinder, camera shake is a danger, which isn't helped by the lens's relatively small maximum aperture. At ISO 50 or 100, noise is a non issue. By ISO 400 it is more obvious. However, the camera doesn't work with WDC's preferred SD card, SanDisk Ultra II.

VERDICT

As a cardcam the S100 is fully featured and performs well. Though it can be fiddly to use, its operational speed is very impressive. **WDC**

FUJIFILM FINEPIX E550

£180 Estimated Street Price

RRP £380

- **CCD** 6.3MP
- **LENS** 32.5 – 130mm
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 3 sec to 1/2000 sec
- **ISO** 80/100/200/400/800
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, A, S, M, Mov, Sc, ±2EV
- **FLASH** 4.5m (W) 2.2m (T)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Opt/ 2inch LCD
- **OTHER** xD, ISO 800 @3MP Resolution
- **POWER** 2xAA
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 105x 63 x 34.4 mm/200g

6 mega pixels

scores

PROS: 6MP sensor, LCD, handling
CONS: 12MP output not up to scratch, noise at ISO 200+

TESTED JANUARY 2005

features	18
ease of use	17
image quality	17
design	16
value	17

85%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Fujifilm E550

The E550 boasts the 6MP Super CCD HR

Essentially the E550 is the same camera as the Finepix F810, in a tough, plastic body. There's a meaty 2in LCD, though it lacks the widescreen LCD and shooting mode that set the F810 apart.

The camera still features Fujifilm's 6MP Super CCD HR, a 6MP sensor that produces a 12MP sized image.

Focusing options include single AF, continuous AF, and manual focus. Focus can be set to centre, multi-zone and wide; and there's a choice of 64-segment multi-zone mode, spot metering or centreweighted. The camera promises good low-light pictures, though resolution falls to 3MP at the highest ISO rating.

Exposure modes are comprehensive. Drive modes include single and continuous, and a progressive mode, that shoots a rapid-fire sequence but only records the first four or last four shots. The pop-up flash is manually activated, so don't forget to press the opening switch. Handling is good, though the recessed controller is a little fiddly for larger hands and not always too responsive.

The camera is suited to producing images nearer the 10MP mark than 12, but A3 prints are very good. Even so, 6MP output seems the best option.

The lens is sharp with little serious sign of fringing, while the colour and exposures are very good.

VERDICT

The E550 offers plenty of options for the enthusiast, though the 12MP isn't all that impressive. **WDC**

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Kodak **EasyShare-One**, the world's first digital zoom camera with WiFi capability

the ONE you want for Christmas

Kodak's EasyShare-One is the world's first digital zoom camera with WiFi capability. It makes it easier than ever to share your pictures, but you'll want to keep the camera for yourself

If you would like to be able to email your pictures direct from your camera, upload your pictures to an online gallery directly and even view all your online galleries on your camera, or would like to be able to show your friends some of your 1500 favourite shots on a massive 3-inch screen, you'll find the Kodak EasyShare-One entirely to your liking.

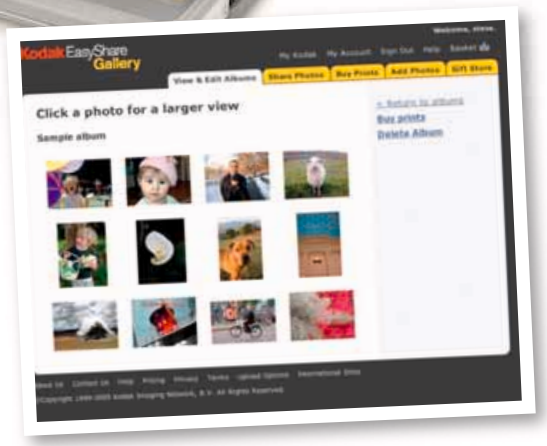
The EasyShare-One comes complete with a WiFi card for just £399. The card allows you to use either any T-Mobile hotspot (at Starbucks for example) or your own wireless network at home to email your pictures and upload your images to the Kodak EasyShare Gallery (see Share your pictures with the world box) where you can store them in an online album – direct from the camera.

If you are some distance from a WiFi hotspot or you want to share your images immediately, don't worry. The EasyShare-One's massive 256Mb internal memory is big enough to store up to 1500 images, and the twist and rotate 3-inch high resolution LCD screen is perfect to view those images on. There's even more to the screen than meets the eye as, in addition to showing you perfect previews and reviews of your digital shots, it's also an intuitively simple control pad. How? Well Kodak has equipped the EasyShare-One with touch-screen technology and its award-winning interface lets you manoeuvre your way around the camera's many features using just your finger, or for even more precise control, there's a built-in stylus that is cunningly concealed within the EasyShare-One's body. Press the stylus and it clicks out to give you instant pin-point accurate control of all the EasyShare-One's touch-screen features.

www.kodakgallery.co.uk

EasyShare Printing

If you've persuaded your loved one to get you an EasyShare-One or have decided to buy one as a present yourself, you can also print your pictures at home without cables as well. Simply place your EasyShare-One on an EasyShare PrinterDock and you can get continuous tone 6x4 inch prints direct from your camera in about a minute. Choose the EasyShare PrinterDock Plus Series 3 and add another Kodak WiFi card and you can print from your camera to your printer from anywhere within the range of your home's wireless network!



The phrase 'big screen' also brings movies to mind and the EasyShare-One doesn't disappoint there either. You can shoot 640x480 TV quality movies with sound at 24 frames per second for jerk-free video for up to 80 minutes depending on the capacity of your external SD/MMC memory card.

Strip away all the EasyShare-one's wireless functions and you're still left with a powerful and attractively designed four-megapixel 3x optical zoom digital camera. The 2408 x 1758 pixel sensor captures images that can be printed up to 12x8.5 inches (30x21.5cm) in size. The TTL autofocus, Kodak Color Science chip and Schneider-Kreuznach Variogon 3x zoom ensure your shots are crisp while the 17 scene modes mean you can shoot with the camera automatically set to produce the ideal picture, whatever the subject or conditions.

All of this is contained in a stunning metal-clad body that's as good-looking as the pictures it produces.

The one problem you'll have with the EasyShare-One this Christmas is deciding whether you really want to give it to someone else. Some things are just too good to share.

Share your pictures with the world

The EasyShare-One allows you to share your images with the world by two ways: firstly you can send pictures directly to your friends and family using the EasyShare-One's email facility or you can connect to the Kodak EasyShare Gallery and use the large 3" high resolution screen to show friends any of your albums on your Kodak EasyShare Gallery account (www.kodakgallery.co.uk - it's free to join). It's never been easier to capture that perfect moment of happiness and then share that pleasure with others almost instantly. Log-on with a PC and you can order real Kodak prints to be delivered to your door.

Kodak

NIKON COOLPIX 4800

£180 Estimated Street Price

RRP £349

- **CCD** 4.0 Effective MPixels
- **LENS** 36-300mm f/2.7 - f/4.4
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 4 - 1/2000sec
- **ISO** Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400 ISO equivalent
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, Prog, 11 scene modes
- **FLASH** GN 12
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** EVF/1.8-inch LCD
- **OTHER** SD/MMC, 13.5MB internal storage, USB 2.0 (Full Speed) and 640x480 video
- **POWER** EN-EL1 Li-ion battery pack (supplied)
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 106 x 66 x 54mm/255g

4 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Handling, excellent optics, metering and AF
CONS: Plastic build, noisy images

TESTED FEBRUARY 2005

features	16
ease of use	18
image quality	15
design	15
value	16

80%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Nikon 4800

Nikon's 4MP superzoom features a 8.3x optical zoom

Nikon's consumer superzoom, the 4800, has a lightweight build with an ergonomically 'swooping' body and clearly marked controls.

The mode dial gives access to main shooting settings, movie mode and the set-up menus. The camera boasts 11 scene modes (as well as those directly accessed on the mode dial), which include panorama assist and a superb 1cm macro setting.

As well as enabling you to scroll the set-up menu and the other menus, the four-way jog button gives direct access to the flash, exposure compensation, macro and self-timer modes, each with a sub-menu. The menu disappears after 3 seconds, so you need to be quick. The menu control provides contextual menus de-pending on the mode you're in.

The LCD and electronic viewfinder (EVF) provide a good 97% field of view and are both very clear and crisp. However, the screen and EVF blank out whenever you take a shot, so shooting moving subjects is irksome.

My test shots show excellent lens sharpness, very little vignetting and no distortion. While colour and white balance are both superlative, noise is very evident over ISO 200. Focusing and metering are excellent, as is the Best Shot Selector (BSS) feature, which takes up to 10 shots, saving only the sharpest.

VERDICT

The 4800 is easy to use, with excellent optics, great metering, AF and colour control, and a neat array of photo tools. But it's all let down by the images, with excessive noise in particular. **WDC**

OLYMPUS CAMEDIA FE-5500

£180 Estimated Street Price

RRP £230

- **CCD** 1/2.5" 4.9MP effect/5.3 Total
- **LENS** 35 - 105mm f2.8-4.8
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 2 -1/2000 sec
- **ISO** Auto, 80, 100, 200, 400, 800 (1.8MP)
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, 8 scene
- **FLASH** 3.5m(W) / 5m (T)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** None/ 2.0-inch TFT 115,000 pixels
- **OTHER** xD, PictBridge, 14MB internal memory
- **POWER** Lithium-ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 94 x 61 x 24mm/175g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Easy to use, good for snapshots
CONS: Uninspiring, fringing, cold colours

TESTED NOVEMBER 2005

features	16
ease of use	18
image quality	16
design	16
value	16

82%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Olympus FE-5500

The Camedia FE-5500 comes with a twist

In the case of the FE-5500, Olympus has taken a conventional design and added a twist, literally.

On pressing the power switch, the lens extracts from the body with a twist from the top of the lens plate to the bottom. This is in order to keep the lens slim.

Exposure settings are limited to automatic options, with metering provided by Olympus's iESP system. As there's no viewfinder, images are composed on the 2in LCD, which is reasonably bright, and just about viewable in very bright sunlight.

This camera has remarkably few buttons, and an uncluttered inter-face. The functions hidden within the camera come with short descriptions, and the menu system is a doddle to use. For anyone who just wants to take some pictures of their holiday or family, without the need to fiddle about, the FE-5500 is a good starting point.

Images aren't bad, but not outstanding. There's some fringing in bright light around highlights and bright areas, and colour is a tad on the cold side, particularly some skin tones. Exposures are generally good, and sharpness is reasonable. However, the lack of a viewfinder can lead to camera shake, even in relatively bright light.

VERDICT

Apart from the interesting lens con-struction, the FE-5500 is a rather average entry-level camera. It's a decent snapper. **WDC**

IN ASSOCIATION WITH JESSOPS

RICOH CAPLIO R1V

£180 Estimated Street Price

RRP £230

- **CCD** 5.2MP (total) 5.1MP (Effective)
- **LENS** 28-135mm f/3.3-4.8
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 8-1/2000sec
- **ISO** 64-800 plus auto
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P + six scene modes
- **FLASH** Built-in GN 9m at ISO100
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** No viewfinder/ 1.8" 110,000 pixel TFT LCD
- **OTHER** 1cm macro focusing, text recording mode
- **POWER** 2xAA /Li-Ion cell
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 100 x 55 x 25mm/150g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Build quality, focal length range, excellent macro

CONS: Images a bit grainy

TESTED MAY 2005

features	15
ease of use	18
image quality	16
design	17
value	17

83%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Ricoh R1V

The 5MP, 4.8x zoom Caplio R1V

When you receive a Ricoh digital camera for testing these days, you know it will focus to 1cm, be ready for action quickly and will have a wideangle lens. Along with the R2 (which eschews the R1V's optical viewfinder for a larger LCD), the R1V ticks all the boxes.

You can feel the quality of construction: pretty much everything is metal. The aperture and shutter speed range give a fair degree of flexibility to exposures (along with the three metering modes and exposure compensation), while focusing is speedy and accurate thanks to the combination external passive/CCD focusing system. Sensibly, macro shots use only the CCD method.

There is no control over aperture except by choosing between sports and landscape modes (two of the six scene modes) and this is a shame as this would complete the R1V's specification as a small utility camera.

The focusing and exposure, even in trying circumstances, are impressive, with backlighting not bothering this camera at all. Which brings us onto the only weak point of the camera. The images it produces look a little grainy where there is not much going on in the image (for example, skies). Even at ISO 100 this was visible, which is a bit of a shame for an otherwise truly excellent camera.

VERDICT

A quick and well built camera with impressive features. Unfortunately let down by image quality. **WDC**

CANON DIGITAL IXUS i5

£190 Estimated Street Price

RRP £300

- **CCD** 1/2.5" 5.4MP (total) 5.03MP (Effective)
- **LENS** 39mm f/2.8
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 15-1/1500sec
- **ISO** 50-400 plus auto
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, P plus 5 Scene modes
- **FLASH** Built-in GN 5.6m on Auto ISO
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** No viewfinder/ 1.5" 78,000 pixel TFT LCD
- **OTHER** 640x480 10fps movie mode
- **POWER** 2x AA
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 90 x 47 x 18.5mm/100g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Design, Small size

CONS: Fixed focal-length lens

TESTED MAY 2005

features	14
ease of use	18
image quality	16
design	15
value	18

81%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Canon Ixus i5

The Digital Ixus i5 is a tiny piece of iconic design

The giveaway thing about this model is where the strap lug is. There's only one, and it is placed where the inference is that it is meant to be worn around the neck, jewellery-like. There's no doubt the i5 is a lovely piece of design, but one that has at its heart a 5MP chip.

The shutter speed range is wide, the focusing system sophisticated and the metering set-up as good as any camera of this price. Unfortunately, the fixed focal-length lens (and one at 40mm that is neither wideangle nor 'standard') gives you no chance to frame anything without doing a lot of legwork. The fixed lens is presumably as a result of physical downsizing. Another symptom is the tiny LCD monitor – the only method of judging anything ahead of the shutter release being pressed. Having said all that, the results this fixed-lens camera does produce are excellent outdoors, if a little dark indoors owing to an underpowered flash. Macro focusing is very good indeed and the chip itself produces wonderfully rendered images.

As long as you don't need a zoom (the digital zoom is pointless), and don't mind limiting your subject matter to small things close-up or head shots of friends, the i5 isn't just a piece of jewellery.

VERDICT

Small, stylish and neat. Excellent images, not just a pretty face. **WDC**

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OLYMPUS IR-300

£190 Estimated Street Price

RRP £275

- **CCD** 1/2.5" 5.19MP total, 5MP effective
- **LENS** 38-114mm f3.3-4.0
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 4 - 1/2000 sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, 17 Scene modes
- **ISO** Auto
- **FLASH** 0.3m-2.6m (W) 0.5m-2.1m (T) GN 6.0
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** None/2in, 206,000 pixels
- **OTHER** xD
- **POWER** Li-ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 99 x 53 x 22mm /112g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Lightweight, easy to operate

CONS: No ISO controls, editing features fair, manual on CD

TESTED OCTOBER 2005

features	16
ease of use	17
image quality	16
design	17
value	16

82%

View this camera 360°
www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Olympus IR-300

Olympus's Easy Imaging baby

This was the second camera released by Olympus in its Easy Imaging System, designed for those people who want to take (and print) digital photographs without a PC.

The central location of the lens gives the IR-300 an unconventional look (for a digicam), compounded by its minimalist white body. It is incredibly light and comfortable to hold and controls are also minimal.

The IR-300's default is Program mode. Adjustments are accessible through the menu, though a dedicated button would be preferable. The IR-300 has an f/3.3-4.0 Olympus lens, whle the iESP auto focus system is largely accurate, if not that quick.

It has two macro modes, Standard and Super Macro, although the lens is fixed at wideangle in macro. The IR-300 can capture 320x240 pixel QuickTime Motion JPEG movies with sound. A digital image stabiliser helps to steady shots, though the optical zoom is disabled. The built-in flash is adequate but the range is rather limiting.

Results are pleasing; apart from the occasional burnt-out highlight, photographs are generally well exposed although colours seem to be a touch on the warm side. Sadly there is no facility to adjust the sensitivity.

VERDICT

There is nothing specific to dislike about the Olympus IR-300. After completing testing, it feels like a very average camera. WDC

OLYMPUS MJU DIGITAL 600

£190 Estimated Street Price

RRP £220

- **CCD** 1/2.5" 6MP effective/6.4MP Total
- **LENS** 35-105mm f3.1-5.2
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 4– 1/1000 sec
- **ISO** Auto, 100, 200, 400, 800, 1600
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, 23 Scene, Movie
- **FLASH** 4m (W)/ 2.5m (T) GN 6.5
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** n/a/ 2.5-inch TFT 115,000 pixels
- **OTHER** xD, 8MB internal, 640x480 15fps movies
- **POWER** Lithium-ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 97 x 55 x 26.5mm/140g

6 mega pixels

scores

PROS: LCD in low light, start-up speeds

CONS: Some soft images, LCD in bright sunlight

TESTED DECEMBER 2005

features	17
ease of use	17
image quality	16
design	17
value	17

84%

View this camera 360°
www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Olympus MJU 600

Will this suit all levels of user?

The 6MP 600 is another addition to Olympus's mju range, available in three colours and featuring the trademark weatherproof body.

Constructed from durable aluminium, it's lightweight and sits comfortably in the hand. There is no clear area for the thumb, and my fingers occasionally and inadvertently changed the exposure mode. There's an impressive collection of 25 scene modes for those who find these modes useful.

The 2.5in LCD incorporates Olympus BrightCapture Technology designed to ensure visibility in dark conditions, which proved very effective. The screen is less impressive in bright conditions, owing in part to the fairly standard resolution of 115,000 pixels.

Start-up is a respectable two seconds, and shot cycle time is around a second for 6MP JPEGS taken at optimum quality without flash. The iESP focusing system detects and focuses on the object in the frame and is mostly accurate. Spot AF focuses on the central area, but there is no manual focus. Pictures are agreeable; they occasionally lack sharpness and I found camera shake more problematic than normal at telephoto position and in low-light conditions.

VERDICT

An attractive, well-built proposition for anyone looking for a point and shoot camera. While manual features are limited, there's an abundant selection of scene modes. WDC

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PENTAX OPTIO WP

£190 Estimated Street Price

RRP £249

- **CCD** 5MP effective
- **LENS** 38 - 114mm f3.3-4.0
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 2 - 1/350 sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Program, 18 Sc, Mov
- **ISO** Auto, 100-400
- **FLASH** 0.13m - 2.5m range
- **MONITOR** 2-inch TFT colour
- **OTHER** SD, Underwater to 5m
- **POWER** Lithium-ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 102 x 51 x 22mm/ 120g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Relatively simple, good underwater camera

CONS: No underwater White Balance, reliance on scenes

TESTED SEPTEMBER 2005

features	16
ease of use	17
image quality	16
design	17
value	17

83%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Pentax Optio WP

Underwater with the Optio WP

Pentax has carved a little niche for itself with the underwater camera. Not only is the Optio WP fine for a half hour underwater up to 5ft – enough for snorkellers and fun on the beach – it is also designed for land use.

Within the WP's menu is a set of white balance options. Strangely, none of these is for underwater photography, which tends to produce a blue cast. Given the nature of the WP, this would seem a desirable option. There is an underwater scene mode in the menu but it doesn't seem to do very much in terms of colour.

WDC wasn't allowed access to the local swimming pool for legal, or moral reasons, so it was down to me, the WP and a bucket of water in the back garden. The camera produced very interesting results. Even better, the flash works underwater too, but picks out tiny floating detritus in the water.

On land the camera offers much the same as other cameras in its class, with 3x zoom, video mode and pleasant, if not critically brilliant, results. The zoom lens is internal, preventing water from leaking into the camera. It has a choice of shooting modes, auto, 'green' mode and video mode. There's also a comprehensive set of scene modes, all displayed on the LCD screen with cartoon logos.

VERDICT

A quirky camera, but good at what it does. It's certainly a lot of fun. There are better cameras around, but this is ideal for holidays. **WDC**

SAMSUNG DIGIMAX i5

£190 Estimated Street Price

RRP £250

- **CCD** 1/2.5" 5MP effective/5.1MP Total
- **LENS** 39 - 117mm f3.5-4.5
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 16 - 1/2000sec
- **ISO** Auto, 100, 200, 400
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, M, 11 scene
- **FLASH** 0.2m –2.4m (W) / 0.3-1.9m (T)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** n/a/ 2.5-inch TFT 230,000 pixels
- **OTHER** SD, 30fps movie with stabilizer
- **POWER** Lithium-ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 89.6 x 59.8 x 17.3mm/133g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Fast start-up, feature set

CONS: Over-complicated menu

TESTED NOVEMBER 2005

features	17
ease of use	16
image quality	16
design	17
value	16

82%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Samsung Digimax i5

Samsung's i5 comes under scrutiny

The i5 is about the size of a pack of cards and similar to the Nikon S1 and Konica Minolta X1.

As lens movement is contained within the body, start-up is a quick 1.5 seconds, and the thumb-operated zoom takes about 2 seconds to extend fully. It boasts a 2.5in LCD, and photos captured at maximum image size of 2592x1944 can produce 13x9.7in prints.

Employing a TTL auto-focus system, weighted to the centre of the screen, focus speeds are fairly quick, though it would be useful to have more variety over the selected area. It can focus as close as 5cm in macro mode and 1cm in Super Macro mode.

The menu is a bit complicated; you don't tend to know which option you are selecting until you get there.

In 'Manual' mode adjustments can be made to white balance, sensitivity and colour channels. There's also a wide selection of scene modes including portrait, children and text capture.

Safety Flash is useful: designed to brighten images in low-light situations when a flash would be intrusive. Colours are vibrant, though fringing is evident in super-macro mode at wide apertures. Slight noise is evident at ISO 100, becoming very obvious at ISO 400.

VERDICT

An attractive, well-featured compact with some neat features, but newcomers to digital photography may find the menus systems difficult. **WDC**

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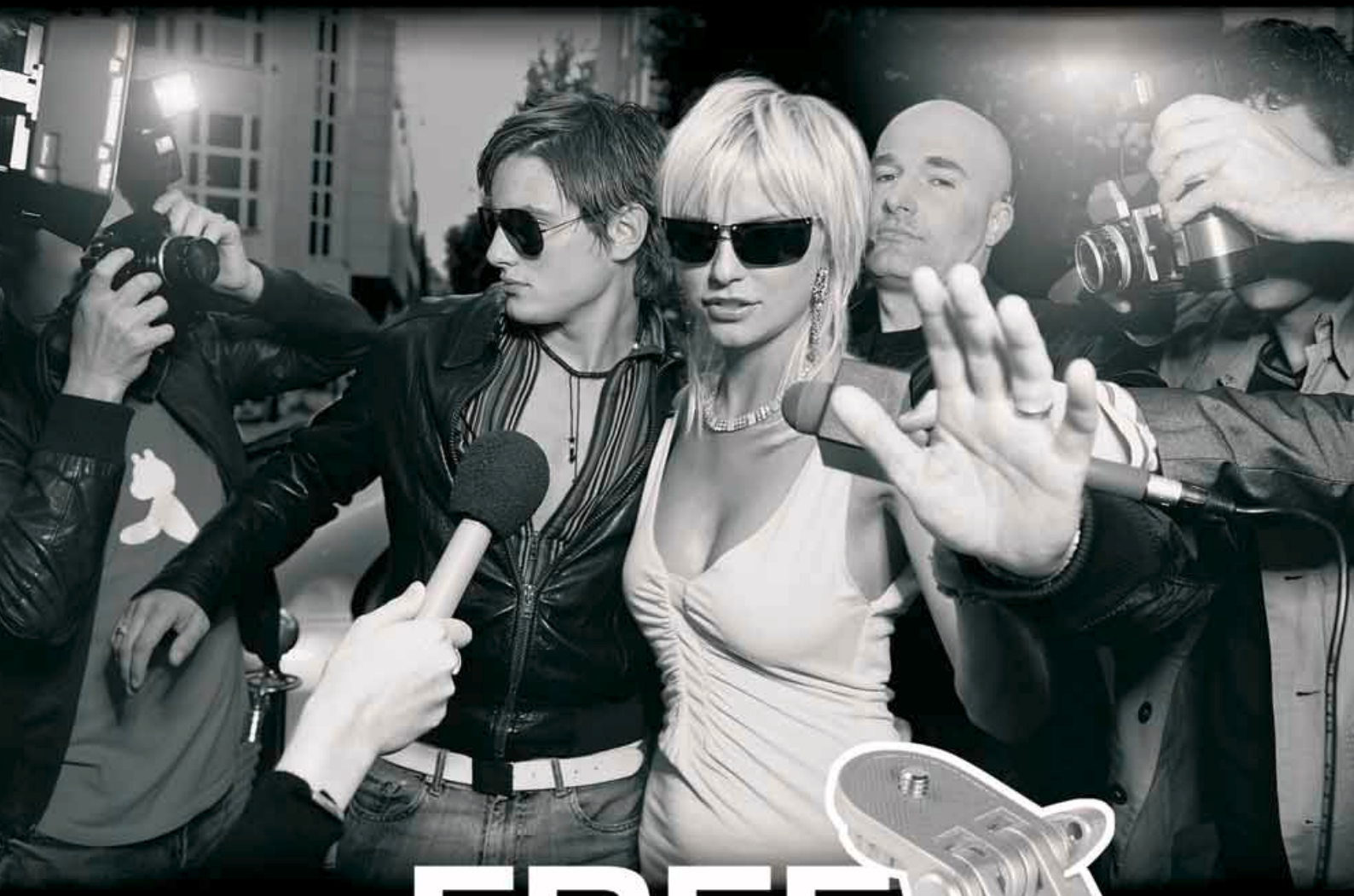

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SONY CYBER-SHOT DSC-L1

£190 Estimated Street Price

RRP £229

- **CCD** 4.1MP
- **LENS** 32-96mm f2.8-5.1
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 1-1/2000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, Auto, 7 scene modes
- **ISO** 100, 200, 400
- **FLASH** 2.0m
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** None/ 1.5" LCD
- **OTHER** PictBridge, USB 2.0, Memory Stick Duo
- **POWER** InfoLithium NP-FT1
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 95 x 44.3 x 5.7mm/122g

4 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Ease of use, speed, build quality
CONS: Small monitor, poor image quality

TESTED MARCH 2005

features	14
ease of use	18
image quality	14
design	16
value	15

77%

View this camera 360°
www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Sony DSC-L1

Sony's L1 is ultra-compact. What's the bigger picture?

Sony has a history of producing very small digital cameras, and the L1 fits right into that heritage, although it is not without its flaws.

It has a strong, attractive brushed aluminium shell and robust metal controls. It's comfortable to hold and controls are well positioned. There's no optical viewfinder, so you are forced to rely on the LCD. With its 1.9 second start-up time and lightning fast autofocus you should never miss a shot. It also has an AF illuminator for shooting in low-light situations.

There's a small but useful array of scene modes and two stops either way of exposure compensation, selectable autofocus, five white balance options, variable flash output, adjustable contrast, saturation and sharpness and a photo effects option. It comes with a 16MB Memory Stick Duo card, so a larger card is an essential purchase.

Despite the 3x Carl Zeiss optical zoom, image quality is a bit of a let-down. While there is little chromatic aberration, and pictures are well-focused and undistorted, there's a lack of detail when they are enlarged to 100%. Images look as if they have been blurred and then sharpened, maybe a result of the noise reduction. This is a 4MP camera, so it's not a killer problem, but big prints could prove disappointing.

VERDICT
Well made and easy to use, this is ideal for snapshots. Lacks versatility and image quality could be better. **WDC**

SONY CYBER-SHOT DSC-W5

£190 Estimated Street Price

RRP £279

- **CCD** 1/1.8-inch 5.25MP CCD, 5.1MP effective
- **LENS** 38-114 mm f/2.8-5.2
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 30 – 1/1000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, M, 7 scene modes
- **ISO** Auto, 100, 200, 400
- **FLASH** Built in 0.2-4.5 (W) 0.3-2.5 (T)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Opt/2.5in, 115,000 pixels
- **OTHER** MS, MS Pro, 32Mb int
- **POWER** 2x AA
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 91 x 60 x 37.1mm/ 253g

5 mega pixels

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

scores

PROS: LCD screen, fast operation, sturdy build
CONS: No separate playback button, less effective in dark conditions

TESTED AUGUST 2005

features	17
ease of use	17
image quality	17
design	17
value	18

86%

View this camera 360°
www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Sony DSC-W5

Sony's fast, sturdy 5MP model

The W5 incorporates a 5MP Super HAD CCD capable of images that can be printed to about 13 x 10 inches at 200dpi. It's sturdy and well-built with a generous LCD screen, next to which are a series of self-explanatory controls. Start-up is 1.5 seconds, and processing is pleasingly quick.

Two AA batteries provide power – it took more than 200 shots using the zoom and flash before the battery indicator displayed half life. Exposure modes include manual, program, auto, and movie. Eight scene modes are accessed through the mode dial along with Playback.

You can choose between centre and multi AF options, the latter incorporating five autofocus points. As well as ISO, white balance, metering and focusing, manual mode lets you adjust the aperture and shutter speed using the central control.

Picture quality gives plenty of detail particularly in bright sunlight. Colours are true to life. Purple fringing is minor, and noise is minimal. The auto-white balance can, however, be fooled indoors and camera shake is evident in low-light conditions when the flash isn't activated. However, home users will not be disappointed with these minor gripes.

VERDICT
A great compact, able to produce good-quality images with little effort – a worthwhile point and shoot. **WDC**

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2.5" TFT Screen.
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Iso 100-3200.
Built in flash + hotshoe.
CF Memory.

£ Very Competitive

Nikon D70S + 18-70mm

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2" TFT Screen.
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Iso 200-1600.
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ACER CR-8530

£195 Estimated Street Price

RRP £199

- CCD 1/1.8" 8.28MP total, 8.1MP effective
- LENS 36-108mm f2.8-4.8
- SHUTTER SPEED 1/2 - 1/500 sec
- EXPOSURE MODES Auto, P, A, S, M, 3 scene modes
- ISO Auto, 50, 100, 200
- FLASH 0.5m –2.7m range
- VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical/ 2.5inch
- OTHER SD/MMC
- POWER Lithium-ion
- DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 91 x 57 x 27mm /150g

8 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Price, wide range of features

CONS: Menu hard to see, restricting features

TESTED SEPTEMBER 2005

features	17
ease of use	15
image quality	15
design	15
value	16

78%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Acer CR-8530

An 8MP model for under £200?

With its 8MP CCD capable of producing 16 x 12in prints at 200ppi, the CR-8530 is a lightweight and comfortable model.

The four-way navigator adjusts the shutter and aperture, and changes the focus, flash command and exposure compensation.

The menu system changes depending on the exposure mode chosen. In most modes it is split into three: Picture, Function and AE/AWB, the latter containing ISO settings, Metering and manual WB. However, some white text is used, making it hard to read in bright light. Also, you can't change the ISO while using a scene mode, despite being able to access other manual features.

Limited to a central point, with no option for manual focus, the autofocus system isn't particularly quick, though an AF lamp assists. Macro results are quite good, though it doesn't always focus as close as it claims (2cm at wideangle or 30cm at tele). Also, it is sometimes hard to see if the image is in focus.

Colours appear a little muted, and noise is terrible after ISO 100. Processing speeds are respectable, though there is slight shutter lag.

Continuous mode is good, (though the screen goes blank, so it's hard to see what you are doing); while Auto Exp takes three shots at different exposures.

VERDICT

Offers a varied feature set, but the menu controls are unnecessarily fiddly and picture quality is variable. WDC

CASIO EXILIM EX-Z57

£200 Estimated Street Price

RRP £279

- CCD 1/2.5-inch 5.25MP CCD, 5.0 MP effective
- LENS 35 -105 mm f2.6 - 4.8
- SHUTTER SPEED 4 – 1/2000 sec
- EXPOSURE MODES Prog, 23 BestShot modes
- ISO Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400
- FLASH Built in 0.2-2.6m
- VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None / 2.7in, 115,000 pixels
- OTHER MS, MS Pro
- POWER Super Life Rechargeable Li-ion
- DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 87 x 58 x 22.5mm / 130g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Small size, BEST SHOT modes, battery life

CONS: No A/V output, little space on back, ISO 400 noise

TESTED AUGUST 2005

features	17
ease of use	15
image quality	17
design	17
value	17

83%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Casio Exilim EX-Z57

How does the well-specified EX-Z57 perform?

Constructed from aluminium, the Z57 is very lightweight and fits in the palm of the hand.

Its 2.7in LCD is great for viewing the menu, but in bright sun it can sometimes be hard to see details. There is no thumb rest; the thumb naturally rests on the tiny zoom control and if you have large fingers it is easy to accidentally hit the up button and change the focus mode. Start-up times are pretty good, at just under two seconds, and there is little evidence of shutter lag. Surprisingly there is no burst mode.

The supplied dock that charges the battery can also be used for viewing and downloading. The impressive set of 23 scene (BEST SHOT) modes includes NightScene, where a 4-sec shutter can be accessed. Users can adjust the sensitivity, white balance (including manual), exposure compensation and focusing by going into the 'record' section of the menu. It would have been quicker if they were all assigned to one key. The 7-point autofocus system works well, although the multi-pattern metering (the only option) can be fooled in high-contrast scenes.

Colours can be a bit oversaturated but pictures are satisfactory, with macro results very impressive. Fringing rears its head and noise is noticeable at ISO 200.

VERDICT

With its many scene modes and generally satisfactory results, the Z57 is a decent camera. WDC

FUJIFILM FINEPIX F440

£200 Estimated Street Price

RRP £200

- **CCD** 1/2.5-inch 4.34MP CCD, 4.1MP effective
- **LENS** 38- 380mm f2.8 - 5.5
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 2-1/2000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, Program, 4 scene modes
- **ISO** Auto, 80, 100, 200, 400
- **FLASH** Built in
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Optical viewfinder 75% coverage/2inch TFT 154,000 pixels, 97% coverage
- **OTHER** xD, exp compensation -2.2 to +1.5EV
- **POWER** Li-ion NP-30 rechargeable
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 74.5 x 62.3 x 1.3mm/150g

4 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Compact, large LCD, quick focusing
CONS: Limited features, split menu system, noisy

TESTED MAY 2005

features	15
ease of use	17
image quality	18
design	18
value	17

85%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Fujifilm F440

We road test the square and stylish F440

The pocket-size F440 is sturdy and well-built. When you pull the silver tab on the front it takes just over two seconds for the lens to slide out. Slightly slower is the task of controlling the zoom which you do with your thumb on a slim up and down rocker.

Other controls are limited to the 'F' photo button, menu, display (giving access to a useful composition grid) and the playback, record and movie switch.

The F440 has no option to adjust the shutter, aperture or metering. Selectable through the main menu, Auto exposure mode lets you change ISO by hitting the F button, while in Manual you can also change exposure compensation in one-third increments and choose between seven preset white balance settings.

Menu choices are split between the FinePix button (containing commonly used settings like image size, ISO and colour) and the main menu, including white balance options and exposure compensation.

AF is quick with little lag. Images are very pleasing; colours are neutral and edges sharp, with little fringing. However, noise is evident from ISO 200. Macro goes down to 9cm, and produces nice results. Finally, the F440 is charged by positioning it in the supplied dock.

VERDICT

Small and easy to use, the F440 is fast enough to ensure you don't miss instant photo opportunities. Despite noise at ISO 200, it can deliver good pictures. **WDC**

FUJIFILM FINEPIX S5500

£200 Estimated Street Price

RRP £300

- **CCD** 1/2.7" CCD 4.23MP total; 4MP effective
- **LENS** 5.7-57mm f/2.8-3.1 (37-370mm equiv)
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 15-1/2000sec
- **ISO** Automatic, ISO64-400
- **EXPOSURE MODES** MASP, four scene plus AUTO
- **FLASH** GN 14
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Electronic viewfinder, 1.5inch LCD, both 115,000pixel and 100% view
- **OTHER** xD card, RAW mode
- **POWER** 4xAA cell
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 113 x 81 x 79mm/480g

4 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Great spec, sensible controls, RAW mode
CONS: Close focus distance, weird colour artefacts

TESTED JANUARY 2005

features	16
ease of use	16
image quality	15
design	16
value	18

81%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Fujifilm S5500

The S5500 has a 10x zoom and great spec

The S5500 boasts a full set of exposure modes, three metering methods as well as auto and eight preset white balance settings.

There are three focusing modes (single shot, continuous and manual) and three focus frame modes. Unimpressively, closest focus is 10cm in macro mode at wide-angle and 90cm at telephoto settings.

The S5500 can shoot at 3fps for three frames, or at 1.6fps for up to 40 shots in long-time continuous mode. There are separate buttons for exposure compensation, continuous shooting, and focus mode; everything else is accessed by the Finepix button or menu button, each with nested menus, but they are all logically placed and easy to navigate, except RAW shooting mode. Start-up is about 4.5secs and the focusing system seems similarly hesitant, and sometimes focuses in the wrong place.

Unfortunately, while low ISO settings are usually recommended for maximum image quality, they have the opposite effect with the S5500. Images show a disappointing level of clarity, though shooting in RAW format in bright light gave excellent results.

VERDICT

The S5500 has a great specification including comprehensive manual overrides, but it isn't always able to turn that into great results. Image stabilisation would make a big difference. **WDC**

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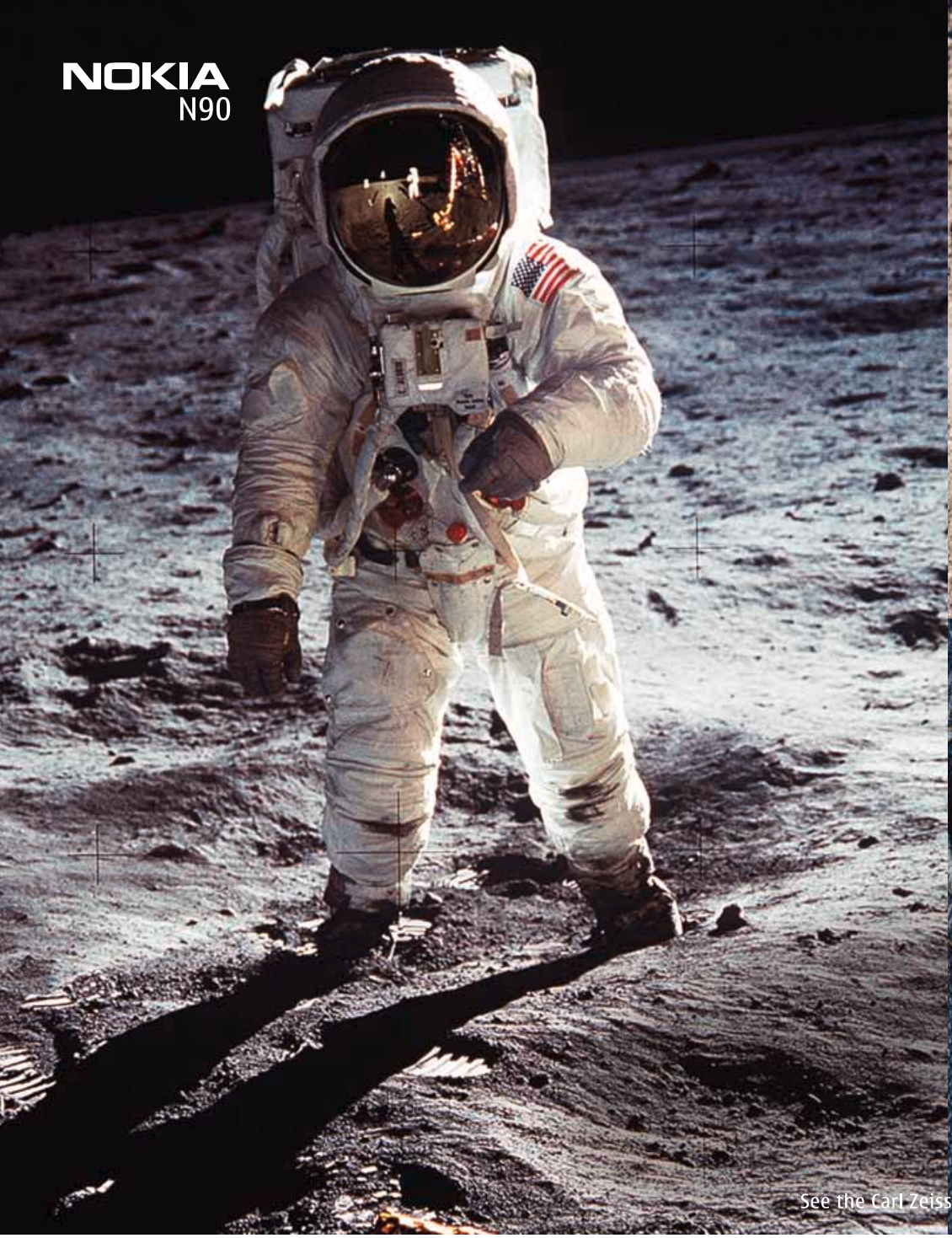

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HP PHOTOSMART R817

£200 Estimated Street Price

RRP £250

- **SENSOR** Total 5.31MP, Effective 5.1MP
- **LENS** 36-180mm f/2.8-4.7
- **SHUTTER SPEEDS** 15-1/2000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** M, A, S, P, Auto, Scene
- **FLASH** 3.8-8m
- **ISO** Auto, 50-400
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** None/ 2in 153,000 pixel
- **OTHER** Real Life Technology, SD, JPEG, PictBridge
- **POWER** Lithium-ion
- **DIMENSIONS/ WEIGHT** 91 x 30 x 57mm/190g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Good feature set, easy to use, value for money
CONS: Noise at ISO 200 plus, video mode, easily spoiled metal finish

TESTED NOVEMBER 2005

features	18
ease of use	18
image quality	17
design	16
value	17

86%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

HP R817

This is a doddle to use, thanks to HP's Real Life Technology

The R817 has a contoured fascia that allows the hand to comfortably curl around the right side. It's nice to have some substance in a camera, in this case in the solid feel and reassuring weight.

HP introduced its Real Life Technology last year and it has been extended and refined in the R817. Applied Lighting Technology automatically lifts shadow or underexposed areas, and reduces overexposed areas in-camera and works quite well.

In-camera red-eye removal recognises the red areas and turns them black. Other features include automatic Panoramic stitching and composition which is useful, especially for non-PC-based printing. The comprehensive Help system will analyse your pictures and tell you what went wrong. Other specifications include the 5MP sensor and the new addition of a 5x Pentax lens, with a useful equivalent focal length of 36-180mm. Exposure modes include manual, shutter priority AE and aperture priority AE modes, as well as a fairly comprehensive set of scene modes, along with a manual focus mode.

Image quality is eminently suitable for 6x4in prints. An ISO of 200 brings some noise, and is more intrusive at ISO 400. Colour balance is geared towards the consumer, with a warmer tone than neutral and healthy skin tones.

VERDICT
Not the cheapest 5MP camera , but the extra length of the lens and ease of use make it good value. **WDC**

KODAK EASYSHARE Z740

£200 Estimated Street Price

RRP £260

- **CCD** 1/2.5 inch 5.36MP CCD, 5.0 MP effective
- **LENS** 38 – 380mm f2.8-3.7
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 8-1/1000sec
- **ISO** Auto plus ISO 80,100, 200, 400, 800
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, A, S, M, 16 scene modes
- **FLASH** Built in GN 10.6
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Electronic /1.8in
- **OTHER** SD/MMC, 35Mb internal storage, USB and 640 x 480 movie
- **POWER** 2x AA, 1x CR-V3 or EasyShare dock with Ni-MH battery pack
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 97.6 x 77.5 x 2mm/287g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: 10x optical zoom lens, comfortable to hold, internal memory
CONS: Fringing, no manual white balance, fiddly joystick

TESTED MAY 2005

features	17
ease of use	17
image quality	15
design	17
value	16

82%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Kodak Z740

This big-zoomer offers a host of features

The Z740 has a relatively fast f/2.8-3.7 zoom lens; its 10x optical zoom makes it a great option for anyone looking to get close to their subject. It is a sturdy, comfortable model, though the exterior looks vulnerable to scratches.

The layout is very clear, as each button is clearly marked and serves one function. A wide selection of scene settings sit alongside program, aperture priority AE, shutter priority AE and manual modes. Adjustments are made using the cumbersome joystick. Multi-zone focusing has no problem recognising and locking onto a subject; however, it isn't particularly quick and, the minimum focus is only 13cm. Surprisingly, there is no manual white balance or manual focus. The Z740 is missing some form of anti-shake technology, which hopefully will be incorporated in future Kodak cameras. Unfortunately the electronic viewfinder is quite pixelly.

Results are generally well exposed, colours are pretty accurate and macro mode – while limited – produces sharp results. Purple fringing is evident in high-contrast situations, even in dull weather, reducing noticeably with a smaller aperture.

VERDICT
With its 10x zoom the Z740 will suit anyone looking for a small, easy-to-use camera. The manual control will suffice for enthusiasts. **WDC**

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KONICA MINOLTA DIMAGE Z20

£200 Estimated Street Price

RRP £200

- **CCD** 5.2MP Total, 5.0MP effective
- **LENS** 36-290mm
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 15-1/2000sec
- **ISO** 50-320
- **EXPOSURE MODES** M, A, S, P + 5 Scene
- **FLASH** Built-in
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** EVF / 1.5in
- **OTHER** SD slot
- **POWER** 4xAA cells
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 109 x 82 x 94mm/300g

5 mega pixels

Konica Minolta Z20

This short-lived all-in-one has plenty to recommend it

scores

PROS: Speed of handling

CONS: Length of telephoto lens

TESTED JUNE 2005

features	17
ease of use	17
image quality	17
design	17
value	17

85%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

The Dimage Z20 does not have image stabilisation but it does have a 290mm telephoto focal length. It should, therefore, be handled with care at the long end.

The shorter focal length is 36mm and this works in combination with a 5.2MP chip to deliver images of 2560x1920 pixels. It has a sophisticated focusing system that combines Video AF for speed with passive AF for accuracy to give a (hopefully) quick and accurate focusing system.

It is actually pretty easy to hold the camera steady and to follow action by panning, at least when you have selected the viewfinder with your arms against your chest for maximum stability. The back of the camera seems festooned with buttons, yet it has fewer than many models. It's just that they are bigger than most. Image processing is quick, start-up times impressive and shot-to-shot times are very good. The focusing is nimble and accurate, impressively so on moving subjects. And in terms of what the camera did, I would not be able to point the finger at anything other than a slightly orangey tinge to the reds on scenes with large areas of green in the background. On the whole, images are sharp, accurate and pleasing to view.

VERDICT

There is very little to criticise about the Z20 as long as you pretend it is only a 5x rather than an 8x zoom. It can deliver pleasingly sharp images if used properly and with care. **WDC**

NIKON COOLPIX S1

£200 Estimated Street Price

RRP £280

- **CCD** 11/2.5-inch 5.36MP CCD, 5.0MP effective
- **LENS** 35 - 105mm f3.0 – 5.4
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 2 -1/350sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Program, 13 scene modes, 4 scene assist
- **ISO** Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400
- **FLASH** Built in
- **MONITOR** No viewfinder/2.5-inch TFT 110,000 pixels flip and twist
- **OTHER** SD, 12MB internal memory
- **POWER** Nikon EN-EL8
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGH** 89.9 x 57.5 x 19.7mm/118g

5 mega pixels

Nikon S1

Nikon's slim new contender

scores

PROS: LCD, easy to use, D-Lighting feature

CONS: Tricky macro focusing, eats battery power

TESTED JULY 2005

features	16
ease of use	17
image quality	17
design	17
value	17

84%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Made from solid metal and the size of a credit card, the S1 joins a breed of style shooters that marry ease of use to fashion.

There are no grips on the camera, making it quite difficult to hold comfortably. Space on the back is limited and the controls are a little cramped. However, they are easy to use; each button fulfils one function and is clearly marked, while the focus on usability continues with the menu system thanks to the large LCD screen and large text.The S1 has an exceptionally fast start-up time of just over a second and there is little noticeable shutter lag. The camera has an automatic multi-area auto focusing system, complete with an AF lamp for low-light conditions. Focusing in macro mode proves rather erratic (as did the blur warning) so it is worth checking image sharpness using the digital zoom. There are 13 scene modes. Of particular note is the D-Lighting feature, which is designed to improve dark or underexposed areas of still images. Images are pleasing: colours are bold and detail is sharp. Noise creeps in at ISO 100 and is unmistakable at ISO 400.

VERDICT

Stylish and easy to use, the Nikon S1 suits users who want point and shoot handling with decent pictures. Features are limited, but scene modes are useful. **WDC**

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OLYMPUS MJU 500

£200 Estimated Street Price

RRP £280

- CCD 5MP effective
- LENS 35-105mm
- SHUTTER SPEED 4-1/1000sec
- ISO 64-640
- EXPOSURE MODES P, Sc, Mov, ±2EV
- FLASH GN 7.8
- VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/ 2.5in TFT
- OTHER xD, PictBridge, 1.5fps for 4 frames
- POWER Li-Ion
- DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 99 x 55.5 x 31mm/165g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Build quality, weather-proofing, image quality, LCD

CONS: Some image noise, limited control, larger than some competitors

TESTED APRIL 2005

features	17
ease of use	18
image quality	17
design	18
value	17

87%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Olympus MJU 500

Is the mju 500 up to the standard of its predecessors?

This 5MP camera is larger than its forebears, mainly to accommodate the 2.5inch LCD screen, while the viewfinder has exited stage left.

The LCD has reasonable definition and clarity in bright sun and exceptional clarity in lower light. Olympus uses its TruePic Turbo processor, offering quick start up, good colour and faster shooting and processing. The camera comes with a 3x zoom as well as the traditional mju weatherproofing feature, making this ideal for outdoor types.

Exposure is simple: Program AE is the main option, with a range of scene modes to cover common situations. There is also a video mode for 15fps movie clips with sound. Metering is via the reliable Digital ESP metering with a spot option and a live histogram. Similarly, the focus is controlled by iESP autofocus with a spot focus option and a Super Macro mode.

The camera has a Lithium Ion battery which, Olympus claims, will last up to 240 shots – quite impressive considering the power drain that the LCD must impose.

Images are more than adequate. Colour rendition is good, with nice skin tones and vibrant hues. Images are well exposed and sharp without looking overprocessed: a common problem with compact cameras.

VERDICT

The screen, style and weatherproof body put this at the upper end of 5MP compacts and certainly one worthy of consideration. WDC

PANASONIC LUMIX LZ2

£200 Estimated Street Price

RRP £240

- CCD 1/2.5" 5.36MP total/5MP eff
- LENS 37-222mm
- SHUTTER SPEED 8-1/2000sec
- ISO Auto 64-400
- EXPOSURE MODES Prog, Sc, Mov
- FLASH Built in
- VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/ 2in LCD
- OTHER SD, Image Stabilisation
- POWER 2x AA
- DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 101 x 64 x 33 mm/224g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Lens, price, Image Stabilisation

CONS: Some image noise, bulkier than most compacts

TESTED JULY 2005

features	18
ease of use	18
image quality	17
design	17
value	18

88%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Panasonic Lumix LZ2

This boasts a long lens and IS

The LZ2 is a 5MP compact with a remarkable 6x zoom. Not only is this the longest lens in its class, Panasonic has equipped it with Mega OIS, the company's Optical Image Stabilisation, to reduce the effect of camera shake.

This is useful in low light, as a lower shutter speed can be used, but also for longer lenses where camera shake is more likely. There are two positions for the OIS: one has continual correction (more likely to drain batteries), and the other kicks in as the picture is taken. Another power drain is the 2in LCD; there's no optical viewfinder, so the monitor is used more often. Despite all this, the LZ2 makes efficient use of the two AA cells, though rechargeable NiMHs would probably be a good investment.

For the most part, images are decent. Noise is a problem at high enlargements; even at ISO 100 there is speckling in shadow areas, especially the blue channel. At print sizes up to 6x8in it's not really visible though. Colour is the strong point: images are well saturated and punchy, while edge sharpness is excellent, if helped a tad by the camera's processor.

VERDICT

Panasonic continues to impress, with a fantastic lens and good colour. Along with the LZ1, Panasonic has carved itself a unique little niche with the 6x zoom and OIS. WDC

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PENTAX OPTIO MX-4

£200 Estimated Street Price

RRP £370

- **CCD** 1/2.7inch 4.23MP total (4.0MP effective)
- **LENS** 37-370mm f/2.9-3.5
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 4-1/2000sec
- **ISO** Auto plus ISO 100, 200, 400
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, A, S, M, ten scene, Movie
- **FLASH** Built-in flash, GN10.5M
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** None, 1.8in LCD
- **OTHER** SD, movie recording at 640x480 pixels, 30 or 15fps with sound
- **POWER** Li-ion rechargeable cell or CR-V3 lithium
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 73 x 59 x 103.5mm/330g

4 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Good movie mode, separate movie capture button, exposures

CONS: Handling, poor stills quality, slow focus

TESTED FEBRUARY 2005

features	16
ease of use	15
image quality	14
design	15
value	16

76%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Pentax MX-4

A 10x zoom with a minimum focus of 0cm

Bridge cameras were designed to have long non-interchangeable zoom lenses with the control of an SLR and convenience of a compact. The MX4 has a 10x zoom with an impressive minimum focusing distance of 0cm.

So far so good. What of other specifications? It has a decent shutter speed range, its lens has a relatively fast aperture range and it has three metering patterns. It has a resolution of 4MP and features such as digital filters, panorama modes, and 640x480 pixel movie shooting with sound. The handgrip houses the shutter release for still photography and around that shutter release is the zoom control.

There's an LCD rear monitor, but no eyepiece for optical viewing. Handling is poor – if you want to hold the camera at eye level to view, you can't see the controls; if you want to see the controls, you have to hold the camera below your eyes.

This could be excused if performance were above and beyond what you might expect. Sad to say, the MX-4 falls down on this level. I found the focusing to be very slow indeed. Images were noisy, often unacceptably so. I managed to capture few outdoor scenes without unacceptable camera shake, owing to the design of the camera. Supermacro shots were a lonely tumult of delight as far as the test results were concerned.

VERDICT

A phenomenon on paper, terrifically well-specified, but unless you'll be shooting mainly movies – it's not the camera for you. WDC

PENTAX OPTIO S5i

£200 Estimated Street Price

RRP £280

- **CCD** 5.0MP
- **LENS** 35.6-107mm f2.9-5.5
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 4-1/2000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Program, Auto, 13 scene modes, Digital filters
- **ISO** 80, 100, 200, 400
- **FLASH** 3.5m(W)-2.0m(T)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Optical/1.8in LCD
- **OTHER** PictBridge, USB 1.1, SD/MMC cards
- **POWER** D-LI8 Lithium rechargeable battery
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 84 x 52 x 20.5mm/105g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Style, image quality

CONS: Slow connection, handling

TESTED OCTOBER 2005

features	16
ease of use	17
image quality	17
design	18
value	17

85%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

What Digital Camera choice

Pentax S5i

Pocket-sized power from Pentax

The diminutive S5i is designed to be easy to use. Its program modes cover most shooting conditions, including night scene, panorama stitching, and there are also digital filters including b&w and a 'slim' setting for portraits.

In the main menu, choices include white balance, a choice of multiple, centre-weighted or spot metering, ISO setting and a time-lapse movie option. Sharpness, contrast and saturation adjustments allow some manual control.

The Optio has a steel shell, and firm, positive controls. A small ridge on the front and back provides grip. Unfortunately, the shutter button and on/off switch are right next to each other, so it is quite easy to hit the wrong one by mistake. Startup is about two seconds, the multi-area AF system is quick and precise, and shot-to-shot time is about 3.5secs in continuous mode. Images display excellent exposure and plenty of shadow and highlight detail. Colour rendition is natural, with good dynamic range. There is a trace of fringing around some bright highlights, but you could print A4 pictures or larger, and be very happy with them.

VERDICT

The S5i lacks the manual functions of higher-spec cameras, but makes up for them with a good range of program functions, and with image quality to match more expensive cameras. You get a lot of camera for your money. WDC

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830	870	875	890	895
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CX5200	CX5400	CX6600	RX420

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RX600			

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C, M, Y, PC, or PM - Single cartridge	£2.49
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C8728A	28	Colour	£14.99
C6656A	56	Black	£11.99
Q7942A	57	Clr+Paper	£11.99
C6658A	58	Photo	£14.99

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Code	Model No.	Price
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1Gb	£44.29	£42.99	-	£41.99	-	£44.99

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	CompactFlash	SD Cards	Mini SD	RS-MMC	MS Pro	MS Duo Pro
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256Mb	£14.99	£16.49	£16.99	£17.09	£23.99	£23.99
512Mb	£29.49	£30.98	£30.99	£29.99	£36.99	£36.99
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xD Cards

	Olympus	Fuji
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1Gb	£61.99	£56.99

integral

	CompactFlash	SD Cards	Mini SD	MMC	RS-MMC	USB Drives
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256Mb	£12.99	£13.49	£17.99	£14.25	£15.99	£14.99
512Mb	£23.99	£23.99	£36.49	£23.89	£33.89	£25.99
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PENTAX OPTIO S5Z

£200 Estimated Street Price

RRP £250

- CCD 1/2.5inch 5.25 MP total /5.0 MP effective
- LENS 35.6 - 107mm f/2.6 – 4.8
- SHUTTER SPEED 4-1/2000 sec
- ISO Auto, 80, 100, 200, 400
- EXPOSURE MODES P, 15 scene modes
- FLASH 0.2-3.5m (W) 0.2-3m (T)
- VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/2.5 inch TFT
- OTHER PictBridge, SD, 9.3Mb internal
- POWER Li-ion
- DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT: 83 x 52 x 21.5mm/120g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Wide range of scene modes, small dimensions
CONS: LCD hard to see in bright light, slow start-up

TESTED OCTOBER 2005

features	16
ease of use	16
image quality	17
design	17
value	17

83%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Pentax S5Z

It's a question of slim but not speedy for the S5Z

Made from aluminium, the stylish S5z is about the size of a pack of playing cards. It uses Pentax's Sliding Lens System, which keeps the camera slim but means it takes the lens three seconds to be ready to use.

Like many similar compacts, space is limited at the back; there's just enough to rest your thumb, and the buttons may be a touch on the small size. The S5z feels tough, although the door protecting the memory card and battery is flimsy, and the tripod mount is plastic.

Despite some manual features such as ISO override and exposure compensation, Pentax is clearly aiming the camera at point-and-shoot users, hence the 15 scene modes. The good-sized LCD screen is quite hard to see in bright sunlight – even when adjusted – and the lack of a viewfinder makes it hard to check framing. The TTL 7-Point Auto Focus system is quick and accurate. Super Macro Mode can focus from 6cm away but by and large focusing is sluggish. Continuous Shooting mode is also slow to use and the screen doesn't refresh very quickly.

Quality-wise, images have vibrant colours and the metering proved to be effective with shots generally very well exposed, although highlights can appear burnt out. Noise isn't a problem at lower ISOs, but ISO 400 should be avoided.

VERDICT
The S5z is capable of producing good photographs, though it isn't as fast as some other cameras. WDC

SAMSUNG DIGIMAX V700

£200 Estimated Street Price

RRP £300

- CCD 7.1million effective pixels
- LENS 38-114mm
- SHUTTER SPEED 15sec-1/2000sec
- ISO Auto, 50,100,200,400
- EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M, Sc, Mov, ±2EV
- FLASH Built in
- VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical/1.8inch
- OTHER SD, Composite mode, PictBridge, Histogram, USB2
- POWER Li-Ion
- DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT: 56.5 x 105 x 29.5mm/150g

7 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Good noise control, plenty of features
CONS: Difficult to use the features efficiently, some artefacts

TESTED MAY 2005

features	18
ease of use	15
image quality	16
design	15
value	16

80%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Samsung V700

The Digimax V700 is truly a fully featured compact

Samsung has made great strides with its cameras lately and keeps offering more and more features at ever-lower prices.

Along with a full set of exposure controls, including manual modes and MPEG4 video, the V700 includes digital effects such as composite mode, for multiple exposures, and also a photo frame function. Samsung has long been dedicated to putting some fun into photography, so I'm sure someone will like it.

The problem with putting so much onto a camera is that it makes it difficult to operate it efficiently. The WDC ease-of-use test entails taking the camera out for the first time without reading the instructions. If an experienced reviewer has a problem using it, what chance a first-time digital user? And so came the problems: it took several minutes to change the ISO, to use shutter and aperture priority and find the WB control.

Images look too digital (a problem common to a few 7MP cameras). Detail seems to be there but, on close inspection, suffers from JPEG artefacts. Over-processing makes images appear too sharp, and fringing is evident. Noise is well controlled at lower ISOs, even in shots with lots of shadow detail.

VERDICT
There's lots to the V700, but it takes time to learn to use and big prints look a bit 'digital'. WDC

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FUJIFILM FINEPIX F10

£205 Estimated Street Price

RRP £299

- **CCD** 6.63 Total, 6.3MP effective
- **LENS** 36-108mm f/2.8-5
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 3-1/2000sec
- **ISO** 80-1600
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Program, Scene, Mov
- **FLASH** Built-in 4m(W)-6.5m(T)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** 2.5" 115,000 pixel TFT
- **OTHER** xD
- **POWER** Li-Ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 92 x 58 x 27.3mm/200g

6 mega pixels

scores

PROS: 2.5in LCD, handling, responsiveness, low light performance, battery life

CONS: Little manual control, no RAW

TESTED JUNE 2005

features	16
ease of use	18
image quality	18
design	18
value	17

87%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Fujifilm F10

Fujifilm calls its new long-life model the '24-hour camera'

The F10's 5th-generation SuperCCD HR sensor offers a straight 6.3MP. Allied to the CCD is a Real Photo (RP) processor that, Fuji says, will all but banish four big bugbears: camera shake, poor flash shots, shutter delay and short battery life.

The 'ultra-fast' processing speeds up shooting, while its improved energy-efficiency means greater battery life. (After 300 shots in my test, the battery indicator still said full.) Real Photo Technology boasts class-leading noise suppression, allowing ISOs up to 1600. A higher ISO enables faster shutter speeds, which reduces camera shake and freezes subject movement. It also means flash can be used less often, at lower power, and has a much greater reach.

With a discreet handgrip on the front and a dimple in the back for your thumb, the F10 is big enough to feel comfortable without being cumbersome.

The scene modes, selected via the menu, include natural (a no-flash, ambient light mode). Manual mode is more 'faux manual', as you can't control shutter speed or aperture. What you get is an extended menu, with white balance, metering mode, exposure compensation, etc. The F10 starts-up in 1.3 seconds. In the menu, you can choose High-Speed Shooting mode, at the cost of battery consumption, and there are three rapid shooting modes.

VERDICT

The F10 is stylish, responsive, and produces excellent images even in dim conditions, where its high ISO performance is outstanding. **WDC**

PENTAX OPTIO SVi

£205 Estimated Street Price

RRP £250

- **CCD** 1/2.5" 5.4MP total/5.0 MP effective
- **LENS** 36-180mm f/2.8 – 4.7
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 4-1/2000 sec
- **ISO** Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, A, S, M, 12 scene modes
- **FLASH** 0.12-4.2m (W), 0.6-2.5m (T)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** None/1.8-inch TFT
- **OTHER** SD, nine filters
- **POWER** Li-ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 91.5 x 56 x 28mm/165g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Feature set, Pentax lens

CONS: Image noise, fiddly mode dial

TESTED OCTOBER 2005

features	18
ease of use	16
image quality	17
design	16
value	17

84%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Pentax Optio SVi

The SVi boasts a good lens

The SVi is yet another in what seems like a continuous line of small, sleek Pentax compacts.

Constructed from aluminium it's a fairly lightweight camera. There's more space than on the S5v owing to the slightly smaller (1.8in) LCD screen. This can be hard to see clearly in bright sunlight, but the well-positioned viewfinder is an adequate alternative.

A highlight is the 36-180mm 5x optical zoom lens, which lets you get closer to your subject than most conventional compacts do.

You access the Picture (scene) and manual exposures modes by turning the small, and rather awkward, mode dial. Instead of having individual positions on the dial you have to initially select manual, aperture or shutter priority from within the menu, and use the 4-way controller to make adjustments. Other features include a live histogram display, AVI movies of 30fps and macro shooting from 3cm.

Image quality is pleasing, yielding well-saturated, vibrant colours. Unfortunately, noise is visible in dark areas even at lower ISO levels of 50 and 100. It can be clearly seen in all channels at ISO 200 and is considerably worse at ISO 400. On occasion, highlights can appear to be burnt out.

VERDICT

The SVi is not the most user-friendly camera, but it's good-looking with an impressive lens and feature set that is suitable for both beginners and more serious photographers. **WDC**

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FUJIFILM FINEPIX Z1

£210 Estimated Street Price

RRP £299

- CCD 1/2.5inch CCD (Total 5.22MP, Effective 5.1MP)
- LENS 36-108mm f/3.5-8.3
- SHUTTER SPEEDS 4-1/1000sec
- EXPOSURE MODES P + 5 scene
- ISO Auto, 64-800
- VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/ 2.5inch 115,000 pixel LCD
- OTHER 640x480 15fps Video, xD card
- POWER Lithium ion cell
- DIMENSIONS/ WEIGHT 90 x 55 x 18.6mm/130g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Design, ease of use, construction quality

CONS: Limited overrides, some lens distortion at close quarters

TESTED OCTOBER 2005

features	16
ease of use	18
image quality	17
design	18
value	16

85%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Fujifilm Z1

Fuji's pocketable 5MP offering

Fujifilm has been making tidy little compacts for quite a while. This model doesn't use the Super CCD but a rather more 'traditional' 5MP sensor.

The lens can focus as close as 8cm in macro mode and goes from 60cm to infinity in normal shooting mode. In terms of handling, the Z1 is pretty easy to use. There are five scene modes, a program mode and a rather inappropriately named manual mode. This last is really just the program mode again but it lets you override the white balance, set exposure compensation and change the AF mode from multi-spot to central spot AF.

The camera is powered by a very slim Lithium ion cell with a rating of 750mAH, which, it is claimed by Fuji, is enough for 170 pictures.

The Z1 is pretty nippy, being ready to shoot about a second after switch on. The focusing is in fact quite quick anyway, although the Z1 is a little slow in terms of time between shots. Flash recharging also slows the Z1 down significantly.

In image quality terms the Z1 is a very good if unexceptional performer. There is a hint of barrel distortion at the lens's wideangle setting and the focusing needs to be set to single frame for any action shots.

VERDICT

The Z1 is aimed at those who want to take decent pictures easily, while looking good. On that level there really is not much to fault it on. And it comes in silver or black. **WDC**

CANON DIGITAL IXUS 50

£220 Estimated Street Price

RRP £310

- CCD 1/2.5inch 5MP effective
- LENS 35-105mm f2.8-4.9
- SHUTTER SPEED 15-1/500 sec
- EXPOSURE MODES Auto, M, 6 scene modes
- ISO Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400
- FLASH 0.5m –3.5m (W) / 2.0 (T)
- VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Real-image optical/ 2.0-inch LCD 118,000 pixels
- OTHER SD
- POWER Lithium-ion
- DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 86x53x20.7mm/130g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Sturdy build, quick operation

CONS: Limited manual features, camera shake possible

TESTED OCTOBER 2005

features	16
ease of use	18
image quality	16
design	18
value	17

85%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Canon Digital Ixus 50

Canon's chic 5MP compact

With its stylish metal body the IXUS 50 looks and feels like a quality product. Thanks to the small ultra-refractive 3x optical lens the body is smaller than a pack of cards, so space around the back is limited. Controls are raised, ensuring they can be pressed easily.

The Digic II processor means the IXUS 50 is a fast little beast; start-up is a swift one-second. In manual mode, adjustments are limited to sensitivity, white balance (including manual), metering and exposure compensation. Despite its decent size, the LCD can prove tricky to view in bright sunlight. The IXUS 50 utilises a 9-point AiAF system that is quick and accurate at detecting and locking onto a subject, assisted in dark conditions by an AF assist beam. You can shoot AVI movies up to 640x480 pixels at 30 and 15fps.

Images are well exposed and the metering accurate, however they can appear to be on the soft side and a considerable proportion of our images were blighted by camera shake, so careful reviewing of images is recommended before moving on. Results in macro mode are sharp and well defined, displaying accurate colours.

VERDICT

A sturdy compact with basic manual features for some experimentation. Generally pleasing results, though camera shake can be a problem. **WDC**

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PANASONIC LUMIX FX7

£220 Estimated Street Price

RRP £350

- **CCD** 5.0MP effective
- **LENS** Leica 35-105mm
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 8-1/2000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, Favourites, Scene, Mov
- **ISO** 80-400
- **FLASH** GN 4m @auto/wide
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** None/ 2.5in LCD
- **OTHER** SD, 4fps memory dependent burst, image stabilisation
- **POWER** Li-Ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 94 x 50 x 24 mm/150g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Style, LCD, OIS, ease of use
CONS: Faint vignetting, limited functions

TESTED JANUARY 2005

features	17
ease of use	18
image quality	16
design	18
value	17

86%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Panasonic FX7

An impressive 5MP successor to the F1

The successor to the DMC-F1 is 33% smaller, yet manages to fit onto its super-slim shell a 2.5in LCD. More impressive is the 35-105mm (equiv) lens incorporating Mega Optical Image Stabilisation.

The camera shake problem increases with smaller cameras, and this is further exacerbated by the use of LCD screens to compose pictures – and the FX7 has no optical viewfinder. Digital cameras have limited sensitivity, and perform best at lower ISO settings.

The camera has Panasonic's Venus Engine II on board, an advantage of this is speed. Photographically the camera is limited to program and scene modes, which keeps it simple. On the digital side there is a small selection of variables, including colour options of warm and cool hues, as well as standard, natural and vivid saturation options.

The level of detail captured is very good, probably among the best I've seen from a 1/2.5in CCD. However it's not perfect, and viewing individual channels shows up noise, even at ISO 80. This is not especially visible in the full-colour images though, and most prints look fine. By ISO 400 noise can be intrusive, especially in sky areas. Fringing is practically non-existent. At 35mm and f/2.8 there is very faint vignetting, but this is invisible in most images. Colour is pleasant with a bias to warmth.

VERDICT
As an example of a stylish compact, with some nifty features, the FX7 is outstanding. There is faint vignetting, but little to worry most people. WDC

PANASONIC LUMIX FX8

£220 Estimated Street Price

RRP £300

- **CCD** 5MP effective
- **LENS** 35-105mm f/2.8-5.6
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 8-1/2000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Program AE, 12 Sc, Mov
- **ISO** 80-400
- **FLASH** Built-in 0.3-4.0m (Wide/ISO Auto), 0.3-2.2m (Tele/ISO Auto)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** None/2.5in 114,000pixel
- **OTHER** SD, Image Stabilisation, cont shooting
- **POWER** Li-Ion cell
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 94.1 x 50.5 x 24.2mm/155g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Mega OIS, LCD, video, simplicity
CONS: Cramped thumb space, average image quality

TESTED SEPTEMBER 2005

features	17
ease of use	18
image quality	17
design	16
value	17

85%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Panasonic FX8

The FX8 is very good value

Every camera needs to have what the marketeers call a USP, or Unique Selling Point. For Panasonic cameras that has been, for a while now, Mega OIS, or Optical Image Stabilisation.

Not only is the lens stabilised it is also a Leica-specified model. With small dimensions and large screen, there is little room left for controls on the back. Menu navigation is via the traditional four-way controller, using four small buttons, and a central select button. The 2.5in LCD screen is good to view too, though I still bemoan the lack of an optical viewfinder. Large screens also bring about another problem – the FX8 has limited finger space, and it's all too easy to press the navigation buttons with your thumb, particularly the exposure compensation and flash buttons.

While image quality is as good as we expect from any brand name compact, there are a couple of features that make the camera shine. First, the image stabilisation ensures that more images stay sharp. Second, the video mode is among the best of any camera, especially in low light, with brighter recording than other cameras can manage. If video is important, consider the FX8.

VERDICT
This is a competent lifestyle camera with a few surprises, namely an excellent video mode and image stabilisation. WDC

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SONY CYBER-SHOT DSC-P200

£220 Estimated Street Price

RRP £299

- CCD 1/1.8 Super HAD CCD, 7.2 MP effective
- LENS 38 - 114 mm f2.8 - 5.2
- SHUTTER SPEED 30 - 1/1000 sec
- EXPOSURE MODES Auto, Prog, 9 scene modes
- ISO Auto, 100, 200, 400
- FLASH Built in
- MONITOR Viewfinder /2.0-inch TFT 134,400 pixels
- OTHER MS, MS Pro
- POWER InfoLITHIUM NP-FR1
- DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 104 x 51.5 x 28mm/180g

7 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Fast, good-quality images, build

CONS: LCD visibility in bright sunlight

TESTED JULY 2005

features	17
ease of use	16
image quality	17
design	17
value	17

84%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Sony P200

Sony's pixel-packed contender

Another entrant into the Cyber-shot range is the DSC-P200, a 7MP compact capable of capturing images 3072 x 2304 pixels in size that can be printed up to 15 x 12ins (at 200dpi).

The 3x optical Carl Zeiss Vario-Tessar zoom lens is operated by a small rocker, and moves smoothly. Covering the LCD is a polycarbonate panel, which makes it difficult to view images in bright sunlight, though you can brighten or darken the screen.

The P200 is lightweight with a durable aluminium exterior. The Stamina battery can capture an impressive 270 shots per charge (according to CIPA standard) and an on-screen icon lets you know how much operating time you have remaining. As well as fully automatic, there's a selection of scene modes and a program mode in which the white balance, sensitivity, exposure compensation, focusing and metering options can be adjusted.

The P200 includes Sony's much-trumpeted Real Imaging Processor, designed to provide a fast start-up and improve picture quality. Pictures are very pleasing – well exposed and generally sharp. Image noise is visible at ISO 200, becoming more noticeable at ISO 400, but never excessive. A minor trace of purple fringing can appear in high-contrast scenes.

VERDICT

A well-made, capable point and shoot, this is quick and easy to use, producing good-quality images. 7MP may be larger than most people need. WDC

CANON DIGITAL IXUS iZOOM

£230 Estimated Street Price

RRP £319

- CCD 1/2.5-inch 5.0MP CCD, 5.0 MP effective
- LENS 38-90mm f3.2-5.4
- SHUTTER SPEED 15-1/1600 sec
- EXPOSURE MODES Auto, 'manual', 6 scene modes
- ISO Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400
- FLASH Built in 0.3-2m
- VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None / 1.8in, 118,000 pixels
- OTHER SD/MMC
- POWER Li-ion cell
- DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 96 x 45 x 24mm / 105g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Compact size, design, ease of use modes, battery life

CONS: Limited overrides, limited zoom range

TESTED DECEMBER 2005

features	15
ease of use	17
image quality	15
design	17
value	15

79%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Canon Ixus i Zoom

Canon's latest 5MP necklace camera

Canon has been at the forefront of cute cameras since the original APS film Ixus. It has also forged a path in terms of getting the most out of its sensors. This is an update of the Ixus i, and as its name suggests, has a zoom instead of a fixed-focal-length lens.

The iZoom has a 38-90mm lens, 5MP resolution and some overrides. Metering can be changed between evaluative, centre-weighted and spot in 'manual' mode, which is the same as auto mode except that in the latter only the file size can be changed. White balance, self timer, ISO and exposure compensation can also only be altered in the manual mode. To change the focusing range from its normal minimum of 30cm you need to switch to macro mode (one of six scene modes) but macro only gets you closer at the telephoto end, where the minimum focusing distance is 10cm. The camera is about the size of a 10-pack of fags and, while the LCD may be small, it's high-definition.

The iZoom produces nicely exposed, well-focused images, and image processing is well handled. If the light permits, set the ISO to 50 rather than let auto take care of it, as noise levels creep up exponentially with the ISO setting. It comes in Black, Cranberry and Sahara (bronze).

VERDICT

An effective, if not ground-breaking, performance. WDC

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Nikon D200

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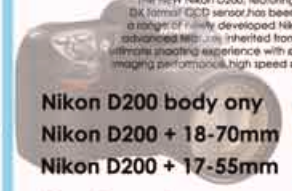

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NIKON COOLPIX 7900

£230 Estimated Street Price

RRP £320

- **CCD** 1/1.8-inch 7.41MP CCD, 7.1MP effective
- **LENS** 38-114mm f2.8-4.9
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 4-1/2000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Program, scene modes, ±2EV
- **ISO** Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400
- **FLASH** Built in
- **VIEWFINDER/ MONITOR** Optical viewfinder / 2in TFT, 115,000 pixels
- **OTHER** SD, JPEG, 3 metering modes, D-Light, red-eye removal
- **POWER** Li-ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 88 x 60 x 36.5mm/150g

7 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Small, high resolution, good noise control

CONS: Image detail and sharpening, AF

TESTED JUNE 2005

features	17
ease of use	17
image quality	15
design	17
value	17

83%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Nikon 7900

We put the Nikon 7900 through its paces

Nikon's top of the range digital compact is the new Cooplix 7900 – small, curvy with a classic (or conventional) style.

Nikon has increased the LCD size to 2ins and incorporated the latest digital technology into the camera. As with other 2005 models, the 7900 has auto red-eye removal as standard. Complementing the 99-point AF system is face-recognition AF, which recognises the shape and colour differences of your face and automatically focuses in that area.

Another new feature is Nikon D-Lighting with an auto contrast correction to salvage shadow details without sacrificing highlight detail. This is especially useful in high-contrast or backlit conditions.

The camera is easy to use, with an emphasis on providing more pixels to the entry-level sector than the enthusiast. Image quality, though, displays a clinical digital look. Images look sharp and detail packed, but there seems to be a lack of hi-fidelity detail, with an over-exuberant sharpening algorithm.

Where the 7900 excels is noise control. It has an optional noise-reduction feature for long exposures, but even at ISO 400 in normal shooting, there was less noise than I've seen in most consumer compacts.

VERDICT

Some interesting and innovative features, but the 7900 is let down by overprocessed images. WDC

NIKON COOLPIX S2

£230 Estimated Street Price

RRP £320

- **CCD** 5.1MP effective
- **LENS** 35-105mm f/3-5.4
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 8-1/2000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, 15 Sc, Mov
- **ISO** 50-400
- **FLASH** Built-in 0.3-2.5m (Wide/ISO Auto), 0.3-1.4m(Tele/ISO Auto)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** None/2.5in 110,000 pixel
- **OTHER** SD, All weather, USB camera dock
- **POWER** Li-Ion cell
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 91.9 x 59 x 22mm/140g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Good front design, scene modes, all-weather

CONS: Back is cramped, lens distortion, corner sharpness is poor, some fringing

TESTED SEPTEMBER 2005

features	17
ease of use	17
image quality	15
design	16
value	15

80%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Nikon S2

Nikon's stylish weatherproof model

The S2 is not an update of the S1, just a variation on a theme. That variation is of interest to those of us in the UK – it's weatherproof.

A dip in a bucket of water isn't advisable, but it should survive a downpour of fine rain and probably a drop into the snow after a gnarly snowboarding crash.

The camera is the size of a pack of cards, with a 3x zoom in a folded optics array (the so-called periscope design). It wears a full metal jacket with a pretty mirror finish lens cover, which slides up and down over the lens to turn the camera on and off. It's also highly prone to fingerprints and you'll probably spend more time polishing it than actually taking pictures. The back of the camera is identical to the S1. The back plate has nowhere to put your thumb, and so it's easy to accidentally press a button.

Images are highly prone to camera shake, especially as there's no optical viewfinder. Another image problem is distortion, with severe barrel and pincushion distortion at the extremes of the zoom range. Fringing in high-contrast conditions sometimes occurs; there's also some sharpness fall-off in the image corners. Exposures and colour are good, with plenty of bold and punchy images.

VERDICT

The S2 looks great and is a good weatherproof option, but images are not what I'd expect from Nikon. WDC

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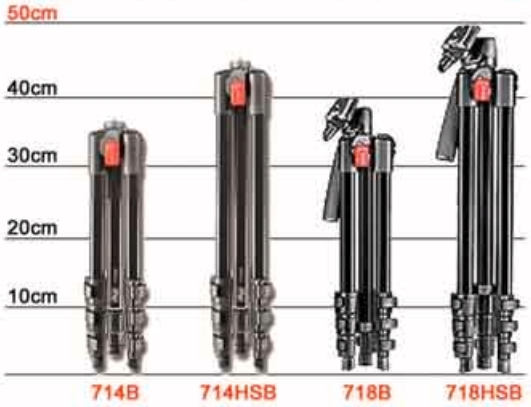

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SONY CYBER-SHOT W7

£230 Estimated Street Price

RRP £329

- **CCD** 7.4MP Total, 7.0MP effective
- **LENS** 38-114mm f2.8-5.2
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 30-1/1000sec
- **ISO** Auto plus ISO 100-400
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, M, P + 6 Scene
- **FLASH** Built-in
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** 1.5in 130,000-pixel TFT
- **OTHER** MS slot, 32MB internal memory
- **POWER** 2x AA cells
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 91 x 60 x 37.1mm/253g

7 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Great performer all round

CONS: High-resolution images

TESTED JULY 2005

features	17
ease of use	18
image quality	17
design	17
value	17

86%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Sony W7

DIGITAL CAMERA choice

This 7MP compact packs a punch, but use it with care

The W7 has a 7.41MP chip that delivers images up to 3072 x 2304pixels, sufficient at 200ppi to let you print an image up to 15x11.5inches.

It may have no aperture settings in between the maximum and minimum for any given focal length, but the W7 does have three metering patterns to choose from, three focusing modes and three main exposure modes as well as seven other shooting modes. It's powered by two (supplied) Sony NiMH AA cells. Sony claims you can get 380 shots with flash from a single charge of these; the W7 is certainly sparing in its power consumption. It leaps into life and zips into focus quickly. A focus aiding pattern emitter comes into play when needed and zooming is fast without being too fast. Individual controls access resolution, flash, macro and the self-timer – everything else is tucked away in menus. The screen is excellent both in colour accuracy and resolution.

Generally, exposures are spot on and lens performance is very good as well. In good light it can deliver images of extraordinary clarity and detail. When light levels drop, though, every image (shot without flash close-up) is not quite there in sharpness and detail.

VERDICT

There's a lot to like about the W7. In normal light levels it delivers stunningly crisp images. In lower light, use a tripod or set the camera to 5MP to get best results. **WDC**

CASIO EXILIM EX-Z750

£240 Estimated Street Price

RRP £330

- **CCD** 7.4MP Total, 7.2MP effective
- **LENS** 38-114mm f2.8-5.1
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 60-1/1600sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Snapshot, M, A, S, +30 Sc
- **ISO** 50-400
- **FLASH** Built-in GN 8
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** None/2.5in 115,200 pixel TFT
- **OTHER** SD slot
- **POWER** Li-Ion cell
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 89 x 58.5 x 22.5mm/127g

7 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Movie modes, scene modes

CONS: LCD colour accuracy, images no better than 5MP

TESTED JULY 2005

features	18
ease of use	15
image quality	17
design	16
value	16

82%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Casio EX-Z750

Meet the slim, sophisticated Exilim EX-Z750

Seven-megapixel models may no longer be the incredible rarity of old but scratch the Z750's stainless steel surface (metaphorically, of course) and you find all sorts of goodies underneath.

While there's a plethora of movie options, including a Silent Movie setting, things are a bit more complicated on the still image side. There's a snapshot mode, a Best Shot mode with 30 choices, and a manual mode that lets you choose between aperture priority, shutter priority and manual. There's also a choice of three metering modes, three focus area modes, continuous shooting, ISO adjustment, and pretty much everything else you might possibly want. The camera starts up quickly enough, and its Li-Ion cell keeps its charge for a surprisingly long time, especially given the size of the screen.

Ordinarily I'd be praising Casio for the size and clarity of this screen but I was staggered by how inaccurate its colour rendition was. The final pictures were close to the right colour. Images were little better than good 5MP cameras' pictures. Exposures aren't bad and the focusing system performs very well, by and large.

VERDICT

A curate's egg. While image colours are generally very good, the LCD's view of the world is rather skewed. More important, the extra pixels contribute little. **WDC**

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OLYMPUS MJU DIGITAL 800

£245 Estimated Street Price

RRP £299

- CCD Total 8.3MP, Effective 8.0MP
- LENS 38-114mm f/2.8-4.9
- SHUTTER SPEED 4-1/2000sec
- EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S +19 scene
- ISO Auto, 64-1600
- FLASH Built-in, Auto plus 3 modes
- VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/ 2.5in 215,000 pixel TFT
- OTHER 640x480 15fps Video, xD card and 19MB int
- POWER Lithium ion cell
- DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 103 x 58 x 33mm/181.5g

8 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Image quality, LCD screen, construction quality

CONS: Left-side backplate button visibility in bright light

TESTED OCTOBER 2005

features	18
ease of use	16
image quality	17
design	17
value	18

86%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Olympus MJU 800

Olympus's compact 8MP 3x zoom model

This is a model that, on paper at least, seems to offer all things to all photographers, except the really keen enthusiasts.

From a theoretical image quality point of view, the mju delivers images that are 3264x2448 in size, which should allow you to print up to 16x12 inch prints at 200 pixels per inch. Its 38-114mm f/2.8-4.9 zoom lens works in conjunction with a focusing system that offers both macro and supermacro functions. The shutter speed range of 4-1/2000sec is wide enough for most situations.

There is no optical viewfinder, but in response to public demand the screen is bigger. The screen itself is nice and bright, and the camera handles well, with all the main functions being where you expect to find them.

Exposures are universally excellent with not a single shot over two testing periods being either under or overexposed. Focusing is generally good but there were two occasions where the graduated tones on a softly lit flower stopped the camera from establishing a focus quickly. Lens quality is excellent, though there is a touch of barrel distortion on close shots at wideangle.

VERDICT

The Mju 800 feels as good as it looks. Images are top drawer for a compact digital camera. Add a matte finish on the backplate controls and it would be a doddle to use as well. All in all, a good performance. WDC

SAMSUNG DIGIMAX V70

£245 Estimated Street Price

RRP £350

- CCD 7.4MP
- LENS 38-114mm f/2.7-4.9
- SHUTTER SPEED 15-1/2000sec
- EXPOSURE MODES Auto, P, A, S, M, 10 scene modes
- ISO 50, 100, 200, 400
- FLASH Wide, 0.3-3.0m, Tele 0.3-2.0m
- VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical/ 2.0in flip & twist LCD
- OTHER PictBridge, USB 2.0, SecureDigital cards
- POWER SLB-1437 Li-Ion or 2x AA
- DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 106.5 x 57 x 38.5mm/190g

7 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Image quality, speed, big monitor

CONS: Fiddly controls

TESTED MARCH 2005

features	18
ease of use	15
image quality	17
design	12
value	18

80%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Samsung V70

Is the V70 a wolf in sheep's clothing?

Samsung is a relative newcomer to the consumer digital camera market, but it's been launching models like there's no tomorrow.

The V70 has a body originally designed for a mid-range compact, which this isn't. The 2in LCD monitor folds out and rotates through 270°. Inside the V70 you'll find nearly all the options you'd expect to find in a semi-pro camera: shutter and aperture priority and full manual exposure. Both shutter speed and aperture are adjustable in half-stop increments, with an aperture range of f/2.8 to f/8.0 and shutter speeds of 15 to 1/2000th of a second.

A highlight is its TIFF storage mode, but it takes 25 seconds to save the file to the card, so this is a format for special shots only. It's a lot quicker to download the files from the camera, thanks to USB 2.0 connectivity. Start-up is quick, as is the AF system. Picture quality is good, but far from perfect. It delivers crisp well-focused pictures, and colour rendition is excellent, but there is a high level of noise at ISO 50, and purple fringing was often visible. In handling terms, the control layout is cramped and cluttered, with small, inaccessible buttons and nowhere to put your thumb.

VERDICT

An ambitious camera. Despite some good features, it lacks the performance and handling to compete at the top end of the market. WDC

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PENTAX OPTIO SV

£250 Estimated Street Price

RRP £350

- **CCD** 5MP
- **LENS** 36-180mm
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 4-1/2000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, A, S, M, 12 Sc, Mov, ±2EV
- **ISO** 50/100/200/400
- **FLASH** 0.12m - 4.2m at wide
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Opt/1.8in LCD
- **OTHER** SD, Histogram, Interval shooting, Timelapse video, Alarm clock and world time
- **POWER** Li-Ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 91.5 x 56 x 28mm/150g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Nice design, lens length, plenty of features
CONS: Image blurring at infinity, noise at ISO 400

TESTED MARCH 2005

features	19
ease of use	18
image quality	15
design	17
value	15

84%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Pentax SV

We check out the 5MP, 5x zoom Optio

At first glance the Optio SV seems to follow the slim'n'stylish modus operandi of previous Optio cameras. The killer feature is its 5x zoom, covering the 35mm equivalent of 36-180mm.

Even more remarkable is the way the lens retracts into the slim body, thanks to Pentax's use of the sliding lens system. Style-wise the camera's brushed aluminium look is attractive, while a well-thought-out rubber finger grip on the front and a small rubber thumb-grip on the back keep the camera from slipping through your fingers, a common occurrence with some metal-bodied compacts.

The 1.8in LCD screen is bright, though starting to look small by today's standards. Hidden around the black surround of the screen is a pair of buttons to operate the menu and camera functions. Manual control, ISO 50–400, and a live histogram are just a few of the features that fit alongside the standard program mode, 12 scene modes and movie mode.

Images from the camera are generally good, though at infinity focus there seems to be some edge blurring at the left side of the pictures. This happens throughout the focal range, which is concerning. Short and middle distance subjects don't have the problem. Colour and exposure is very good, and at ISO 50 noise is controlled. Images suffer at ISO 400, but it's nice to have a small camera with such a wide ISO range.

VERDICT

The Pentax Optio SV is a competent performer with a useful specification that's relatively easy to use. You can't really ask for more than that. **WDC**

RICOH CAPLIO GX8

£250 Estimated Street Price

RRP £300

- **CCD** 8.5MP Total, 8.2MP effective
- **LENS** 28-85mm f/2.5-4.34
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 30-1/2000sec
- **ISO** 60-1600
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, Aperture Priorty, Manual + 6 Scene
- **FLASH** Built-in
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Optical/ 1.8in 130,000 pixel LCD
- **OTHER** SD slot
- **POWER** 2x AA cells
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGH** 113.6 x 58 x 29mm/205g

8 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Lens, build, features
CONS: Power consumption, LCD colour cast, continuous mode recording speed, video mode

TESTED AUGUST 2005

features	17
ease of use	15
image quality	16
design	17
value	16

81%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Ricoh GX8

An 8MP compact with plenty of high-end spec?

The GX8's tough aluminium body and matt black finish harks back to the film compact's glory days, while the 28mm lens reminds you of the groundbreaking GR21's 21mm lens.

It has some nice high-end features – how does complete manual control grab you? Or macro to 1cm? Start up times were pretty reactive, but there were instances when the camera locked up, which appears to do with battery power.

The GX8 may be a small compact but it allows for grown-up use. There is a manual mode, accessible in the menu. Other features of note include the flash options of red-eye reduction, slow sync and a hotshoe for external flash. In bright light the optical viewfinder is essential, besides which, the screen on this camera has a distinct green colour cast.

Results are good, if the ISO is low and the camera stationary. From ISO 200 noise is visible. It stays about the same until ISO 800 and rises again at 1600. Also, as the ISO is raised, a green cast creeps into images. On the plus side, chromatic aberration is handled extremely well and the lens gives consistently sharp results.

VERDICT

There are problems with power, and the way the GX8 locks up when there's not enough. However, there are good reasons to buy it – the lens, features and build quality. **WDC**

IN ASSOCIATION WITH JESSOPS

SONY CYBER-SHOT T3

£250 Estimated Street Price

RRP £400

- **CCD** 1/2.4inch 5.25MP CCD, 5.1MP eff
- **LENS** CarlZeiss 38-114mm f/3.5-4.4
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 1-1/1000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, Program, 8 scene modes
- **ISO** Auto plus ISO 100, 200 and 400
- **FLASH** Built-in GN 7.5m
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** 2.5inch TFT, 230,400pixels
- **OTHER** MS Duo
- **POWER** Lilon 3.6V 680mAh rechargeable
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 91 x 60 x 18mm/171g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Beautifully elegant design, good user control, good 1cm macro, LCD

CONS: Exposure modes rather limiting

TESTED FEBRUARY 2005

features	17
ease of use	18
image quality	17
design	18
value	16

86%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Sony T3

What Digital Camera choice

An epitome of the expression 'small objects of desire'

Let's get what the Sony Cyber-shot T3 isn't out of the way. It's not an SLR, nor a serious hobbyist's model. It lacks controls for either aperture or shutter speed.

So having decided what it's not, what is it? Well, it is surprisingly well-specified in other ways. Its focusing system is sophisticated and even includes a manual option. It is drop-dead gorgeous with a massively impressive LCD. It's slim and oozes high quality.

In terms of handling, it's pleasantly surprising how easy it is to hold it steady. It is largely menu-driven but they all make sense, and depending on whether you are in auto or program or one of the scene modes, there are different levels of what options you are given.

As far as the images are concerned, as I'd already viewed them on the fantastic LCD I wasn't at all surprised by how good they are on screen. Focusing is excellent, exposures are spot on and there seems to be no problems, in fact, with any aspect of the T3.

Macro focusing capabilities are excellent, and daylight performance and flash performance are very good. It is not, perhaps, the fastest-reacting camera, but capture and review speeds, thanks to the MS Duo card, are nevertheless impressive.

VERDICT

The Sony Cyber-shot T3 is a very, very good camera indeed, masquerading as a must-have fashion accessory. WDC

KONICA MINOLTA DIMAGE Z5

£260 Estimated Street Price

RRP £350

- **CCD** 1/2.5 inch 5.2MP CCD, 5.0 MP effective
- **LENS** 35- 420mm f2.8-4.5
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 4 - 1/1000th sec
- **ISO** Auto, 50, 100, 200, 320
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, A, S, M, 5 scene modes
- **FLASH** Built in GN 8
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Electronic viewfinder 114,000 pixels /2.0-inches LCD
- **OTHER** SD/MMC, USB 2.0 and 640 x 480 movie
- **POWER** 4xAA cells
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 108.5 x 80 x 84mm/340g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: 12x optical zoom, manual features, anti-shake

CONS: Noise at high ISO, LCD hard to see in bright light, commands hidden in menu

TESTED JULY 2005

features	18
ease of use	16
image quality	17
design	16
value	18

85%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Konica Minolta Z5

What Digital Camera choice

12x optical zoom and much, much more

Konica Minolta's Z5 builds on the success of the Z3, with a few notable enhancements.

The CCD is now capable of capturing 5MP images, and the on/off button is separate from the mode switch. The 2in LCD screen may be sometimes tricky to see in very bright light, but there's the EVF instead for these conditions. It's comfortable to hold and controls are within easy reach. While it feels weighty this doesn't translate into durability, as some components feel weak. It strikes a lovely balance between being user-friendly and offering lots of control. The outstanding feature is the 12x optical zoom with a telephoto focal length of 420mm (35mm equivalence), making it a versatile lens. It takes just 1.5seconds to go from wide to telephoto and about 2 seconds for the zoom lens to extend from the barrel at start-up. Autofocus is, however, speedy.

Anti-Shake technology has been incorporated and picture quality is for the most part good, producing well-exposed results in light and shadow areas, without fringing. Noise is, however, more visible at ISO 320 and, while the lens gives sharp results, there is slight softening at wide angle.

VERDICT

The 12x optical zoom alone will appeal to nature photographers; add anti-shake technology, decent picture quality and fast operation, and the Z5 comes recommended. WDC

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KONICA MINOLTA DIMAGE X1

£260 Estimated Street Price

RRP £299

- SENSOR 1/1.8inch CCD (Total 8.3MP, Eff 8.0MP)
- LENS 37-111mm f3.5-3.8
- SHUTTER SPEEDS 1 - 1/1250sec
- EXPOSURE MODES P + 7 scene
- FLASH Auto plus 5 modes
- ISO Auto, 50-200 (Auto 50-160)
- MONITOR None/2.5inch 115,000 pixel TFT
- OTHER 640x480 pixel, 30fps Video, SD
- POWER Lithium-ion cell
- DIMENSIONS/ WEIGHT 95 x 68 x 19.5mm/135g

scores

PROS: Anti-Shake, image size, LCD size

CONS: Slow in review mode

TESTED NOVEMBER 2005

features	17
ease of use	17
image quality	17
design	18
value	17

86%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

8 mega pixels

Konica Minolta X1

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

The X1 is sleek, skinny, and boasts 8MP

Konica Minolta's unique Anti-Shake system is required thanks to two separate factors: the high resolution and the body form of this camera. Thin and small cameras are harder to hold two-handed.

As well as the Anti-Shake system, the X1 has an 8.1MP chip, a Video AF system that (in Supermacro mode) gets you as close as about 8cm from the front of the camera. The lens is a periscopic 3x zoom whose movement is entirely internal and has a maximum aperture range of f/3.5-5.6.

In handling terms there are relatively few buttons on the camera, which, given how much of it is taken up by the 2.5inch LCD, is probably no bad thing. Even though there are nine buttons clustered together I was able to select the button I wanted thanks to their shaping. The fact that the Anti-Shake system has to get its head around how much you are moving means it is a little slower to respond than some other cameras, and the sheer size of the images means that image processing is also a little slower.

Now to image quality. Like all cameras, this one performs better in bright light than in lower lighting levels. The Anti-Shake system is good, but it will only compensate for so much shake.

VERDICT

The X1 gives you phenomenally high resolution and a bundle of other features to boot. Pretty easy to use as long as you don't want to use it like an SLR. WDC

OLYMPUS CAMEDIA SP-500 UZ

£260 Estimated Street Price

RRP £300

- SENSOR 1/2.5inch CCD (Total 6.37MP, Eff 6.0MP)
- LENS 38-380mm f2.8-3.7
- SHUTTER SPEEDS 15-1/1000sec
- EXPOSURE MODES Auto , M, A, S, P, 21 Scene
- FLASH 0.3m - 4.5m (W) 1.2m-3.4 T, GN9
- ISO Auto, 80, 100, 200, 400
- VIEWFINDER/MONITOR EVF 201,600piel/ 2.5in 115,000px
- OTHER 320x240 30fps Video,10Mb int, xD
- POWER 4x AA
- DIMENSIONS/ WEIGHT 105.5 x 74.5 x 71mm/285g

scores

PROS: Good functionality, RAW, LCD and EVF

CONS: Bland looks, some fringing, oversharpening and image noise

TESTED DECEMBER 2005

features	17
ease of use	16
image quality	18
design	17
value	18

86%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

6 mega pixels

Olympus SP-500 UZ

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

A Superzoom camera that acts like it's a compact

The SP-500UZ is small, yet still manages to squeeze a lot into its diminutive stature.

It offers much for the enthusiast, including RAW recording and the full set of exposure controls, Program, Aperture priority, Shutter priority, and full Manual. There's the impressive Predictive AF system for tracking moving subjects, not to mention the IESP metering system, and 143 individual focus points, which can be linked to the spot metering function.

The electronic viewfinder, with 201,600 pixels, manages to be sharp, with the added benefit of electronic readouts. In many respects this is a camera that people have been crying out for; it's got plenty of photographic control and fits into a pocket. Plus it's got that long lens. But it's not perfect. The plastic body lacks the style and toughness of some other cameras at the price.

Time after time despite varying conditions, the SP-500 produced perfectly exposed pictures. Image sharpness is good; results are impressive. Image noise is a problem, though lower ISO settings prove to be well controlled. Colour is good, though a little too saturated for my taste.

VERDICT

A competent and a useful camera. It acts like a compact, with the features of a superzoom; the ideal camera to chuck in your bag when you don't want to carry an SLR or other bigger camera.

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SONY CYBER-SHOT T7

£260 Estimated Street Price

RRP £300

- **CCD** 5.1MP effective
- **LENS** 38-114mm f3.5-4.4
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 1/8-1/1000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, Scene modes, Mov
- **ISO** ISO 64-400
- **FLASH** Built in 0.1-2.6, Tele: 0.5-2.1
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Opt/2.5in LCD
- **OTHER** Memory Stick Duo, MPEG 1, PictBridge, USB 2.0
- **POWER** Info Lithium
- **SIZE/WEIGHT** 91.7 x 60.2 x 14.7mm/ 114g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Good image quality, good looks

CONS: Small and fiddly, poor LCD in bright light

TESTED AUGUST 2005

features	16
ease of use	16
image quality	17
design	16
value	15

80%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Sony T7

Superslim, you can take the T7 anywhere

It seems there's an ever-expanding choice of ever-shrinking cameras. Sony has added to its own superslim T range with the arrival of the T7.

This 5.1 million effective pixels model uses a folded optical path to wedge in an internal Carl Zeiss 3x zoom lens, with composition and image viewing made possible on a large 2.5in LCD TFT screen. All of that somehow fits into a thin body not much larger than an average business card.

The Zeiss lens offers the equivalent of a 38-114mm lens in 35mm terms, with a maximum aperture of f/3.5-4.4. It offers a fairly pedestrian array of exposure options. Common scenes are included but a problem with the scene modes is the lack of description. The confusion is added to by the camera's manuals, consisting of a full manual and a quick start guide, with information spread between the two, which is frustrating.

The camera has a lovely design, but controls are for dainty fingers, and the accompanying labels are small and difficult to read. Despite all this, the T7 manages to turn in good pictures. Fringing is well controlled and sharpness is adequate. Exposures are good throughout the exposure modes and detail is captured well.

VERDICT

Not perfect but a competent performer. Sony needs to get its manuals and documentation right, or increase clarity in the menus. **WDC**

CASIO EXILIM PRO EX-P505

£270 Estimated Street Price

RRP £300

- **CCD** 1/2.5-inch 5.25MP CCD, 5.0 MP effective
- **LENS** 38 - 190mm f3.3-3.6
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 60 -1/2000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, P, A, S, 22 Scene modes
- **ISO** Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400
- **FLASH** Built in
- **MONITOR** No viewfinder /2.0in TFT 84,960 pixels
- **OTHER** SD, MMC, 7.5Mb int
- **POWER** SUPERLIFE lithium-ion cell
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGH** 98.5 x 55.5 x 74mm/ 215g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Fast focusing and start-up, 5x optical zoom

CONS: Cramped controls, poor build, excessive noise

TESTED JUNE 2005

features	18
ease of use	16
image quality	15
design	16
value	15

80%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Casio Pro EX-P505

The third in Casio's Pro range

If you put the word Pro in your camera's name, you should expect to be judged by that standard. The EX-P505 is small and lightweight, the build doesn't feel durable; and the zoom control and mode wheel feel flimsy.

There's a lot packed into this camera, including a 5MP CCD capable of 12.8 x 9.6in 200dpi prints, a 5x optical zoom, a host of exposure modes and a range of autofocus options. Without a viewfinder you are dependent on the 2in rotating LCD screen, which at 84,960 pixels is disappointing resolution-wise.

Autofocus is quick and accurate; manual focus is controlled using the four-way controller. Included is an advanced MPEG-4 movie mode. The display enables controls such as white balance and ISO to be quickly accessed and there is a conventional menu, a range of display options and guidance menus about the selected exposure mode.

Picture quality is disappointing: images aren't very sharp and high-contrast scenes show signs of purple fringing. Noise is visible at ISO 200, dire at ISO 400. On a positive note, colours are accurate and Super Macro Mode produces great results.

VERDICT

Great on paper, the EX-P505's noise, flimsy build and cramped control layout ultimately let it down. **WDC**

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PANASONIC LUMIX FZ-5

£270 Estimated Street Price

RRP £350

5 mega pixels

- **CCD** 1/3.2inch 5.36MP total (5.0MP eff) CCD
- **LENS** 36-432mm f/2.8-3.3
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 8-1/1000sec
- **ISO** Auto plus ISO 80,100, 200, 400
- **EXPOSURE MODES** M, A, S, P + 9 scene
- **FLASH** Built-in flash, GN12.6M
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** EVF, 1.8in LCD
- **OTHER** SD/MMC, 320x240 pixels movies, 30 10 15fps with sound
- **POWER** 8.4V 680mAh Li-Ion cell
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 108 x 68.4 x 85mm /290g

scores

PROS: Great zoom range, excellent lens

CONS: Noise in low light

TESTED MAY 2005

features	18
ease of use	16
image quality	17
design	17
value	17

85%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Panasonic FZ5

A competent can-do camera

Panasonic has made the transition from image-capture-device maker to manufacturer of photographers' tools, and the Lumix range is one of the best on the market.

The FZ5 is in a sense an SLR, as the same lens is used for both viewing and capturing the image. In addition to its 5MP resolution and the fast-apertured 12x zoom, it offers image stabilisation: MEGA OIS.

There is also a separate exposure mode for panning, wherein 'only vertical jitters can be corrected'. Focusing is from a choice of five different patterns/modes; metering from a choice of three patterns. The AF is nippy and effective, the viewfinder and LCD give useful feedback and accurate viewing. The zoom on the lens couldn't be much quicker. The FZ5 fires out a focus assist beam when required and the flash must already be pre-charged as it is instantly available for use when popped up. Continuous four pic sequences can be shot at full resolution and processing speed is impressive.

There is a touch of barrel distortion at the very widest focal-length position and the FZ5 is certainly happiest in bright light because there is random noise in areas of low tonal variation in low light, but the lens quality in any light is excellent.

VERDICT

Megazooms can have narrow apertures at the long end but this is not the case with the FZ-5. One of the best of its breed. **WDC**

CANON POWERSHOT S70

£280 Estimated Street Price

RRP £450

7 mega pixels

- **CCD** 1/1.8inch 7.4MP total (7.1MP eff) CCD
- **LENS** 28-100mm f/2.8-5.3
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 15-1/2000sec
- **ISO** Auto plus ISO 50,100, 200, 400
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, A, S, M, 6 scene modes, movies at 640x480 pixels 30 fps with sound
- **FLASH** Built-in flash, GN 11.8M
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Opt/1.8in, 118,000 pixels
- **OTHER** CF I or II, Movie recording, PictBridge
- **POWER** 7.4V 750mAh Lithium Ion rechargeable cell
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 114 x 56.5 x 38.8mm/230g

scores

PROS: True wideangle lens, close focusing quality

CONS: Exposures can be a little dark

TESTED MAY 2005

features	18
ease of use	16
image quality	18
design	17
value	17

86%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Canon S70

Looks aren't everything for this capable digicam

The S70 is a 7MP camera in a wide and thick-ish flat body. From the front it looks rather non-descript. Flip the camera over, however, and you get a hint of the power that lies beneath.

The back of the camera is festooned with buttons. It is switched on by pulling back the sliding lens cover, on which operation the 28-100mm lens pops out. It has a wide shutter speed range and a flexible focusing system that allows you to move the focus point within the image area. You can, at a glance, see everything you need to change any function in one place. The zooming control is a little noisy and hesitant; given that the zoom range is only 4x, this was a bit of a disappointment.

The S70 offers such a degree of control over how you can set up the metering and focusing to meet the challenges of any situation, that it would be thumbing a nose at Canon's engineers to ignore this. When used with the appropriate settings to the circumstances, the results are truly excellent. Use it casually, though, and you may be disappointed. Use it properly, and image performance and lens performance from the S70 should make you very happy indeed.

VERDICT

A camera that a capable photographer could do an awful lot with. Use it in the manner it is designed to be used, and you will get some very memorable shots. **WDC**

IN ASSOCIATION WITH JESSOPS

PENTAX OPTIO X

£290 Estimated Street Price

RRP £350

- CCD 5.0 Effective MPixels
- LENS 35.6-107mm f2.6 -4.8 (3x optical zoom)
- SHUTTER SPEED 4 - 1/2000th sec
- EXPOSURE MODES Auto, Program, 15 scene modes
- ISO Not stated
- FLASH GN 9.5
- VIEWFINDER/MONITOR No viewfinder/2in LCD
- OTHER SD/MMC (14MB built-in), 320x240 video with sound to limit of storage, PictBridge, +/-2EV
- POWER D-L18 rechargeable lithium-ion battery pack (supplied) charged via dock
- DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 116.5 x 46.5 x 75mm/145g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Great metering, good specification and design

CONS: Barrelling, fiddly handling, overprocessed pics

TESTED JANUARY 2005

features	17
ease of use	15
image quality	16
design	18
value	16

82%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Pentax Optio X

Great-looking camera, good-looking pics

It was Nikon and Agfa that introduced us to the twist-design digicam, but Pentax's Optio X is an extremely pocketable version of the breed.

One section of the two-part body contains a 3x zoom lens and flash, with the 2in LCD in the other, larger section. It takes a while to get used to the multi-function control afforded by the neat mini joystick that doubles as a four-way controller and button to activate extra shooting options. A tiny zoom control, situated vertically alongside the colour screen, is quite fiddly to use. However, other controls are clear and less tiddly. The camera comes with ACDSee software to organise and also to help you stitch your panorama images together on PC.

The Optio X's swivel design makes composing at awkward angles easier than more traditional shapes and a tripod socket built into the camera strap swivel makes it even more versatile.

Picture quality is generally pretty good. Metering is the standout feature, working well on a large range of subjects. The AF hunts a little if the subject lacks contrast, and there's some barrel distortion at wide angle settings. Colour is natural, with little noise evident. But detail is reduced slightly by over-processing in-camera – even in Best setting, there's evidence of JPEG artefacts.

VERDICT

The Optio X is a comprehensive package offering good picture quality, a touch marred by overzealous image processing. **WDC**

SANYO XACTI C4

£290 Estimated Street Price

RRP £499

- CCD 1/2.7" 4.23MP total /4.0 MP effective
- LENS 38-220mm f/3.5 – 3.7
- SHUTTER SPEED 4 (lamp mode)-1/2000 sec
- ISO Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400
- EXPOSURE MODES P, 6 scene modes
- FLASH Built in
- VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/1.8-inch LCD
- OTHER 128Mb and 1Gb SD cards supplied, two filters
- POWER Li-ion DB-L20
- DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 69 x 108 x 34mm/159g

4 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Video and still image capability

CONS: Awkward handling

TESTED SEPTEMBER 2005

features	17
ease of use	16
image quality	16
design	15
value	16

80%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Sanyo Xacti C4

Sanyo's camera/camcorder combo

The C4 has the ability to capture still images and so-called DVD-quality VGA movies at 30fps.

You lift the LCD screen to start-up and you only have to wait about two seconds before you can take a picture. There is no single shutter release, rather there are dedicated movie and still image buttons with another for the fairly easy-to-control zoom function.

The menu is split into basic and advanced sections, which you navigate using a small, rather awkward, joystick. Features accessible in advanced mode include white balance, focusing, noise reduction and sensitivity. A key improvement is the inclusion of a moving image stabiliser – useful when shooting movies in telephoto position.

The 4MP chip can produce prints of 9x11.5ins at 200dpi with strong colours, though the white balance can be fooled. Noise creeps into the blue channel at ISO 100 and ISO 400 should be avoided. The C4 can also produce 8MP images through interpolation; though picture quality is adequate, pix are less sharp than at 4MP.

The focusing system isn't perfect: the AF sometimes focuses on the incorrect area and occasionally when using focus lock the focal length changed. The LCD also proved difficult to see with clarity in bright sunlight.

VERDICT

A useful option for still and movie capabilities, though the handling can be difficult. **WDC**

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PANASONIC LUMIX DMC-FX9

£300 Estimated Street Price

RRP £350

- CCD 1/2.5inch 6MP effect/6.37 Total
- LENS 35-105mm f2.8-5.0
- SHUTTER SPEED 8-1/2000 sec
- ISO Auto, 80, 100,200, 400
- EXPOSURE MODES Auto, P, 14 scene
- FLASH 0.3m – 4m (W) 0.3-2.2 (T)
- VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/2.5in TFT 207,000 pixels
- OTHER SD, 30fps movie
- POWER Lithium-ion
- DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 94.1 x 50.5 x 24.2mm/155g

6 mega pixels

scores

PROS: LCD, anti-shake

CONS: Limited space around back

TESTED DECEMBER 2005

features	17
ease of use	18
image quality	17
design	17
value	17

86%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Panasonic DMC-FX9

An update to an old favourite

The DMC-FX9 looks similar to its predecessor, the FX8. The main difference is the 6MP resolution instead of 5MP, producing pictures good enough for 14x11in prints at 200dpi.

Additionally the resolution of the 2.5in LCD has been increased from 150,000 to 207,000 pixels. The LCD is a joy, providing a bright, incredibly clear view, making it easy to compose a photograph.

Performance times are impressive: there is little evidence of shutter lag and start-up is under 1.5secs. In 6MP mode you can zoom up to 3x optically; the Extra Optical Zoom (AKA digital zoom) feature enables you to extend this to 4x if you are happy to shoot 3MP images.

To reduce the effect of blur in low-light conditions the FX9 has optical image stabilisation with two modes: Mode 1 works continuously, Mode 2 is activated when the shutter is depressed. There are five selectable autofocus modes and adjustments can be made to white balance, exposure compensation, sensitivity and a slow shutter can be enabled, although there is no control over the aperture.

Images are good, with strong colours, though fringing occurs in high-contrast situations and noise is evident at ISO 200, more so at ISO 400.

VERDICT

The LCD ensures that the FX9 is a marked improvement over the FX8. A fast compact, producing good quality photos and movies. WDC

CANON DIGITAL IXUS 700

£300 Estimated Street Price

RRP £400

- CCD 1/1.8" CCD, 7.1 MP effective
- LENS 37-111mm f2.8-4.9
- SHUTTER SPEED 15 - 1/2000 sec
- EXPOSURE MODES Auto, Prog, scene modes
- ISO Auto, plus 50,100, 200, 400
- FLASH 50cm-5.0m (W) / 3.0m (T) @ ISO AUTO
- MONITOR/VIEWFINDER 2.0-inch LCD/ Optical
- OTHER SD, histogram, PictBridge
- POWER Li-Ion
- SIZE/WEIGHT 89.5 x 57.0 x 26.5 mm/170g

7 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Design, good image quality, quick

CONS: Manual photographic controls are limited

TESTED JULY 2005

features	16
ease of use	18
image quality	18
design	18
value	17

87%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Canon Ixus 700

Is the Ixus 700 too good to be true?

The stylish Ixus range continues to march merrily forward with this addition – the 7MP Ixus 700. Instantly recognisable as an Ixus, it has had a slight makeover to keep up-to-date and modish.

It has a lovely matt finish and a nice 2.0inch LCD. However the large screen is still difficult to see in bright light. On the back are the operational buttons including a four-way controller and a five-position mode dial.

There are options for digital macro, ±2EV exposure compensation and ISO adjustment covering an agreeable ISO 50-400.

The function modes are easy to use, in keeping with the overall handling of the camera, which is quick with generally good autofocus operation.

Operation is pretty impressive, while images are among the best seen from a 7MP camera, normally a category lacking. Most of the images look natural, with good colour and contrast. Exposures are generally very good.

VERDICT

One of the better 7MP cameras, producing excellent images, while still maintaining easy operation. The 2inch LCD screen is a welcome addition and some of the manual functions add a fun spin to image creating. WDC

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KODAK EASYSHARE V530

£300 Estimated Street Price

RRP £300

- CCD 1/2.5" 5MP effective/5.36 Total
- LENS 36-108mm f2.8-4.8
- SHUTTER SPEED 8- 1/448 sec
- ISO Auto, 80, 100, 200, 400, 800 (1.8MP)
- EXPOSURE MODES Auto, 20 scene
- FLASH 0.6m –2.8m (W) / 1.9 (T)
- VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/ 2.0-inch TFT 230,000 pixels
- OTHER SD, 5 colour modes, 16Mb internal memory
- POWER Lithium-ion
- DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 92 x 50 x 22mm/130g

5 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Plentiful scene modes
CONS: Slow optical zoom, poor LCD performance in bright light

TESTED NOVEMBER 2005

features	17
ease of use	16
image quality	17
design	16
value	17

83%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Kodak V530

A look at this sleek 5MP contender

The V530 is certainly attractive with a brushed metal front and a convenient pocket size. It's both lightweight and comfortable to hold.

The 2inch LCD can be problematic in bright sunlight and as there is no viewfinder it can be hard to compose pictures. The four-way controller is located at the left, and it takes about two seconds for the Schneider Kreuznach lens to extend: neither slothful nor speedy.

Manual features are limited: sensitivity can be adjusted from ISO 80 to 800. Four preset white balance settings feature, along with adjustable colour mode, sharpness and metering, accessed through the user-friendly menu system. Autofocusing is mostly accurate, though not as quick or precise as some; but an AF assist lamp aids focusing in low-light levels. Macro mode can focus as close as 5cm at wideangle. Continuous shooting mode can take five pictures at 2.5fps and it can capture up to 80 minutes of 640x480pixel 30fps VGA movies.

The photos the V530 produced are pleasing: skin tones are accurate and colours are vivid, though occasionally they seem over saturated. Purple fringing also appears in high-contrast situations and it often overexposed tricky scenes.

VERDICT

Marrying ease of use with a selection of scene modes and manual features, the Kodak V530 is a decent entry into the point-and-shoot market. But sadly, the LCD's performance in bright light lets it down a bit. WDC

OLYMPUS CAMEDIA C-70 ZOOM

£300 Estimated Street Price

RRP £399

- CCD 7.1MP
- LENS 38-190mm (5x zoom) F2.8-4.8
- SHUTTER SPEED 15-1/2000sec
- ISO 80, 100, 200, 400
- EXPOSURE MODES P, A, S, M, 5 scene modes
- FLASH 3.8m(W)-2.2m(T)
- VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Optical/2.0in LCD
- OTHER PictBridge, USB 1.1, xD-Picture cards
- POWER LI-12B 3.7V Lithium rechargeable battery
- DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 102 x 59 x 42.4mm/220g

7 mega pixels

scores

PROS: Build quality, design, image quality
CONS: Lousy zoom control, over-complicated menu

TESTED APRIL 2005

features	18
ease of use	17
image quality	19
design	18
value	17

89%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Olympus Camedia C-70

Another 7MP camera, but this is a cracker

The Camedia C-70 may not look like a crowd beater, but there's more to this camera than modern and stylish looks. It is also functional with a metal alloy shell and a comfortable rubberised handgrip.

The control layout has a bare minimum of buttons. The pop-up flash is manually controlled, avoiding superfluous flash use. Handling and performance are, for the most part, excellent. The start-up time is impressive at just under two seconds from off to ready. One grumble is that the zoom control is imprecise, operated by a collar around the shutter button, but this is more of an on/off switch. The zoom moves in large, jerky steps, making accurate framing difficult. More subtle control would have been a bonus.

It can shoot VGA video (640x480 pixels) at 30 frames per second, with mono sound. Picture quality is the best in its class, as Olympus seems to have found a cure for the dreaded purple fringes: the TruePic TURBO image processor. Colour rendition, detail and sharpness are superb, noise reduction is subtle but extremely effective and the 5x zoom lens performs well, with the tiniest hint of corner blurring and a degree of barrel distortion at wideangle.

VERDICT

Well-built with many excellent features, and outstanding image quality. If you feel the need for 7 megapixels, this is certainly worth considering. WDC

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SONY CYBER-SHOT DSC-H1

£300 Estimated Street Price

RRP £400

- **CCD** 1/2.5-inch 5.1 MP effective
- **LENS** 36-432mm f2.8-3.7
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 30-1/2000sec
- **ISO** Auto, 64, 100, 200, 400
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, P, A, S, M, 7 scene modes
- **FLASH** 0.3m – 6.8m (W) 0.9 - 5.2m (T)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Electronic/ 2.5in TFT LCD, 115,000 pixels
- **OTHER** 640 x 480 movie mode, 2cm macro, MS, MSPro, 32Mb internal
- **POWER** 2x AA cells
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 108 x 81.4 x 91.2mm/ 590.8g

top

The internal flash pops up automatically when one of the flash modes is selected

front

Supplied with the H1 is an adaptor ring, that lets you add a wideangle or tele lens

side

A plastic flap, with a rubber hinge, protects USB and AV connections

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

CANON S2 IS

£340

scores

PROS: 12x optical zoom, feature set, build quality

CONS: Lacks some pro features such as RAW

TESTED SEPTEMBER 2005

features	18
ease of use	17
image quality	16
design	17
value	17

85%

see more on the web

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5 mega pixels

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

Sony Cyber-shot H1

Sony wants a slice of the superzoom market with the H1

The H1 is Sony's first entry into the big-zooming non-SLR market. It has a fast (f/2.8-3.7) lens with a focal length equivalent to 36-432mm (12x optical zoom) and a 5MP CCD, making it great for wildlife or action photography.

It isn't heavy, yet feels like a 'proper' camera, putting function above fashion. The buttons are a decent size and a dial that can be used to adjust the aperture and shutter controls is positioned within easy reach of the index finger. The versatile lens – unlike most of the Cyber-shot range – isn't by Carl Zeiss. Sony claims that this the only way the H1 could have been developed with the optical steady shot (stabiliser) was with a Sony lens. On start-up, the lens expands and the impressive 2.5in LCD screen activates in about two seconds.

The only supported still-image format is JPEG, which is a little disappointing as TIFF or RAW would be useful with a camera that is otherwise so well specified. The H1, for example, offers Manual, Aperture and Shutter Priority exposure modes, which provide plenty of scope for creativity, as well as a Program shift mode. VX MPEG Movie mode shoots 640x480 movies at 30fps and the Burst mode works well, capturing up to nine 5MP images in Fine mode, making it a worthwhile feature for action shots. The scene modes enable some manual adjustments to be made, though some options – such as ISO and sometimes White Balance – are unavailable.

The H1 has a wide range of focusing options. Multi-point AF is effective, quickly and accurately detecting focus points within a central frame. As well as centre autofocus, there's Flexible Spot AF, which lets you choose the AF point. Macro mode can focus as close as 2cm at wideangle and 90cm at telephoto. Results are pleasing: generally sharp and displaying lots of detail. Sony's Real Imaging Processor captured more than 100 5MP images consecutively, without the buffer memory becoming full. Shutter lag didn't prove problematic either, enabling spontaneous capture.

One of the most interesting features of the H1 is its Super Steady Shot optical image stabiliser. It compensates for camera shake in low-light conditions and at telephoto position when camera shake can be problematic. The default setting 'Shooting' starts working when focus lock is achieved, although you can choose to have it on all the time with 'Continuous.' The H1 includes Stamina batteries that can take more than 260 shots from a single charge, depending how often the zoom is used. The H1's results are sharp – if on the odd occasion a little overprocessed – and colours are well reproduced. Image noise isn't bad: it's just visible at ISO 100, worsening, though still usable, at ISO 200; unfortunately at ISO 400 it is plainly and unattractively visible. Shots are well exposed, though highlights can be burnt out and fairly noticeable purple fringing is evident in some high-contrast scenes.

VERDICT

With its 12x optical zoom, versatile feature set and 5MP CCD, the H1 offers plenty for the enthusiast photographer. Operation is straightforward enough and the well-designed shape and layout ensures that it is comfortable to use. WDC

LCD BUTTON
Press the Finder/LCD button to swap between the viewfinder and the LCD. The finder adjustment lever controls the focus, but it is awkwardly positioned and impossible to adjust without touching the screen

FOUR-WAY CONTROLLER
Use the four-way controller to access flash, macro, last-shot review and self-timer options. The buttons are a decent size, ensuring that you don't hit the wrong control by mistake

IN ASSOCIATION WITH JESSOPS

KONICA MINOLTA DIMAGE Z6

£300 Estimated Street Price

RRP £350

- CCD 1/2.5-inch 6.0MP effective/6.4MP total
- LENS 35-420mm f2.8-4.5
- SHUTTER SPEED 4 – 1/1000th sec
- ISO Auto, 50, 100, 200, 320
- EXPOSURE MODES Auto, M, A, S, P, 5 scene modes
- FLASH ISO 100 equ 8m/26.2f
- VIEWFINDER/MONITOR Electronic/ 2.0-inch TFT LCD, 114,000 pixels
- OTHER 320 x 240 movie mode, 4 colour modes, 1cm super macro, SD
- POWER 4x AA cells
- DIMENSIONS 108.5 x 80 x 84mm/ 340g

6 mega pixels

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

Konica Minolta Z6

The latest megazoom in the DiMAGE series

The Z6 is the follow-up to the Z5 with the addition of an extra megapixel. This creates images 2816 x 2112 pixels in size, equating to 14x11in prints at 200dpi, although the camera retains the 1/2.5in sensor.

Available in silver or – as a Jessops exclusive – a smart black colour, the chassis is constructed from tough plastic; the reinforced grip fits your hand well and it is light enough to use one-handed. However, the durability of the memory card door and the optical zoom control is dubious, both of which could snap off if handled too vigorously.

The Z6's 2in LCD screen is a touch on the small size and its performance is inconsistent. You can choose between single AF, continuous AF and manual focusing. Single AF is generally accurate and quick, while Continuous AF with predictive autofocus utilises the large focusing area at the centre of the frame. On occasion, when the lens is at telephoto position, the AF system takes several attempts to achieve focus lock, particularly on objects that are nearer the lens. Macro and Super Macro mode are selectable through a button adjacent to the shutter: in standard mode the Z6 can focus from 10cm, decreasing to 1cm in Super Macro mode, though the lens is fixed at wideangle.

As expected, there's a full set of exposure modes, while exposure compensation can be adjusted from +/-2EV in one-third increments. You can choose between multi-segment, centreweighted and spot metering; select from sensitivity levels of ISO 50, 100, 200 and 320; and adjust Colour mode, Sharpness and Contrast. Most of these commands are located in the menu, but it would save time if you could access them with buttons on the camera body.

Featuring the same bright f/2.8-4.5 lens used on the Z5, superb for wildlife photography, the Z6 takes about 1.5 seconds to move from wide to telephoto position. The Z6 includes Anti-Shake technology, which is particularly useful when the lens is at telephoto position.

The Z6 is a fairly fast camera to use. Shutter lag isn't a problem and shot cycle time is very respectable at about 1.5secs for JPEGS taken at maximum image size and optimum quality. However, the DiMAGE does take a rather frustrating three seconds to start-up when in sleep mode.

Pictures produced are generally accurate, skin tones are well represented and colours are true to life, thanks to the CxProcess III. Purple fringing is evident in high-contrast situations – as expected. Image noise is visible in the red and blue channel at ISO 100, although it only really becomes noticeable in all channels at ISO 200, while it is much more evident at the maximum sensitivity setting of ISO 320.

VERDICT

While not a radical update to the Z5, it is comfortable to hold, intuitive to operate, and packed with features. Throw in the impressive 12x optical zoom, Anti-Shake technology and good results, and the Z6 is recommended. WDC

top

Adjust the focus of the EVF to suit your eyesight by scrolling the adjacent dioptre adjuster up and down

front

An optional 26mm wideangle converter is available as part of the ZCW-300 kit

side

A secure neck strap is supplied that fits through the metal eyelet. DC and USB connections are under a plastic flap

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

SONY H1

£300

scores

PROS: Fast operation, lens

CONS: LCD hard to see in bright sunlight, some components feel weak

TESTED NOVEMBER 2005

features	18
ease of use	16
image quality	17
design	16
value	18

85%

see more on the web

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THREE-WAY LEVER
Flick this switch to swap between playback and record (using the LCD) and record (using the viewfinder) modes

INFO BUTTON
Hit the information button in playback mode to display file information and view your images as thumbnails. Press it in record mode to view a live histogram

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CANON POWERSHOT S2-IS

£340 Estimated Street Price

RRP £469

- **CCD** 5.3 MP (5.0MP eff)
- **LENS** 38-432mm f2.8 - 3.1
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 15-1/3200sec
- **ISO** 50-400
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, A, S, M, Auto, six scene
- **FLASH** Built-in, Hotshoe
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** EVF/ 1.8inch LCD
- **OTHER** SD storage, IS, Flexizone Focus
- **POWER** Li-Ion Cell
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 113 x 78 x 75.5mm/405g

5 mega pixels

Canon S2-IS

This 12x zoom model sensibly includes Image Stabilisation

top

The zoom control surrounds the shutter release. The record/play mode selector button surrounds the on/off button

front

The left and right stereo microphones are visible just above the lens

side

The SD card slot and battery compartment sit in the oversized hand grip

The S2-IS gives you a 12x zoom, a 1.8inch LCD and a 5-megapixel resolution. This in a body just 2mm taller than the S1-IS. The lens's extra length is due to its greater zoom ratio and the battery grip, as it has a different arrangement of the 4xAA battery slots from the S1.

The only other real change from the top-line specification is a mildly extended top shutter speed from 1/2000sec to 1/3200sec. The lens is astonishing in its compactness and changes by less than a centimetre as it zooms from its 36mm to its 420mm position.

The S2-IS has the DIGIC II image processing system which is Canon's proprietary firmware that turns the pixels into pictures and saves them. While this is very good, it's a shame the camera allows only JPEG rather than JPEG and RAW format saves. But there are a number of nice touches: the flip-around monitor is one of the best of its kind in terms of flexibility of movement. The Image Stabilisation system prompted rather fewer feelings of seasickness when looking through the eyepiece than it did the S1, and the handgrip makes the S2 very steady to hold. But it's worth noting that like anti-redeye systems, anti-camera-shake systems will only reduce the effect on your pictures, not necessarily eliminate it. Where this happens, the results are not great.

In terms of control placement, the S2 uses the ubiquitous four-way up/down/left/right arrow controller with a menu and function buttons to access most of the features. The On/Off switch allows you to go to record or play modes, but when in play mode you can shift back to record mode merely by pressing the shutter release button. Movie shooting can be accessed merely by pressing the large red button even if you are in still record or play modes.

The metering and focusing sides of the S2-IS are, generally, excellent. The flash is super-effective in fill-in situations and there were no problems with straight flash exposures either. The macro focusing works well – although I would recommend single-point AF as depth of field is obviously going to be very limited at the 50cm minimum focus distance.

By and large the S2-IS delivers excellent-quality images, though perhaps lacking the punch of images from some other Canon models. Colours are accurately rendered, and the auto white balance works well under a whole series of different lighting conditions. Internal sharpening is not aggressive and some images can benefit from subtle further sharpening. There is an occasional strange fringing effect where image stabilisation combines with strong backlighting to create unnatural junctions between light and shade at the edge of details. This is the only blot on an otherwise pristine image-processing landscape as far as the S2's image quality is concerned.

VERDICT

A speedy enough camera with excellent metering, focusing and occasionally astounding image stabilisation. While IS delivers better noise control results than upping the ISO settings, there is still a price to pay for shooting in low light levels. WDC

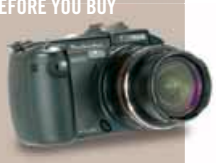
LCD
The fliparound LCD TFT monitor is a very useful addition in terms for shooting at odd angles, but for general usage – especially at telephoto, the Electronic Viewfinder (EVF) is a better bet for shake-free images

[S] BUTTON
The [S] button is a user-programmed shortcut to a specific function. One of nine different functions – including resolution, frame rate, filters and sensitivity – can be set using the button

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

CANON PRO 1
£550



scores

PROS: Image stabiliser is ideal for 12x zoom, good AF
CONS: Bit bulky, bit pricey, only saves to JPEG

TESTED AUGUST 2005

features	17
ease of use	16
image quality	17
design	17
value	15

82%

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OLYMPUS CAMEDIA C-7070

£350 Estimated Street Price

RRP £499

- **CCD** 7.4MP Total, 7.1MP effective
- **LENS** 27-110mm f/2.4-4.8
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 15-1/4000sec
- **ISO** 50-400
- **EXPOSURE MODES** M, A, S, P + 7 Scene
- **FLASH** Built-in, Hotshoe
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Real size optical /1.8in 130,000 pixel LCD
- **OTHER** xD and CF slots
- **POWER** Li-Ion Cell
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 116 x 87 x 65.5mm/433g

7 mega pixels

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

top

The C-7070's top-plate has a hotshoe, mode dial and the usual LCD and controls

front

The dual AF system windows are visible above the camera's lens

side

The Camedia has plenty of connections covered by rubber flaps

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

PENTAX 750Z

£400

scores

PROS: Image quality

CONS: Function finding

features	18
ease of use	15
image quality	18
design	18
value	17

TESTED JUNE 2005

86%

see more on the web

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Olympus C-7070

Olympus's high-resolution wideangle prosumer camera

The C-7070 is a highly specified model with muscular looks. The sheer size of the camera is one reason for this; the uncompromising form-following-function aspect of the design is another.

The 7.4-megapixel chip has 7.1 effective megapixels. The lens is a useful 27-100mm and the camera's chip produces images of 3072x2304 pixels. There is a wide selection of focusing, metering and exposure modes on offer, and a pleasing amount of user override available on pretty much every level of the multifarious photographic options.

The Camedia has so many different specification options that can be accessed in a number of different ways, the easiest might have been simply to use more buttons. For the less initiated, basic functions are easy to find. The mode dial is simple to use, while the flash and focusing options work well, it's just that some functions are hard to find. On the credit side the LCD screen is a thing of beauty – crisp and clear to see. The zoom lens control is not the quietest or quickest – however, the benefit of a slower and longer travel zoom is that it gives you control. In image-processing terms a seven-megapixel image is never going to be the quickest thing to manipulate, sharpen and compress. Continuous shooting is thus more a question of images being taken in succession rather than the machine-gun rattle of some other rather speedier models. The question is: does the extra time the C-7070 takes, result in improved quality?

The C-7070 has macro and supermacro functions that allow its lens to be focused on the smallest, or rather nearest, of objects. These functions are only as good as the image quality they generate. In focusing terms it's certainly good enough for the lens that's on it. Exposures are colour perfect and although some scenes with extremely white clouds and a majority of sky are a touch underexposed, I would have been more worried if the camera had not performed in that way. In short, with the exception of the somewhat laborious image processing, I can find no fault with the pudding proofing stage of this model's test.

The C-7070 delivered images that are sharp, except where light levels were really low. There is an abundance of detail and the images, while sharp enough for most tastes, will also bear a small amount of unsharp mask application in Photoshop before they break up at the single pixel stage.

VERDICT

There are some digital cameras that are fun and some that you respect and that make you work hard. The Camedia C-7070 fits fairly and squarely into the last of these categories. It may not be pretty but it is certainly effective. WDC

LCD
The twist-and-shoot LCD allows you to view images from in front or behind the camera, from the side or even from above the top-plate. It only gets a little tricky when trying to view images shot in portrait format

FOUR-WAY CONTROL PAD Once in the menu system, you navigate around the various functions by means of up/down/left/right buttons and an OK button to confirm your function selection

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CONTAX U4R

£350 Estimated Street Price

RRP £400

- CCD 1/2.7in 4MP effective interlaced CCD
- LENS 38-115mm f/2.8-4.7
- SHUTTER SPEED 1-1/2000sec
- EXPOSURE MODES Program, 8 scene modes
- ISO Auto, 50-400
- FLASH Built-in GN 8.4M (at ISO 100)
- VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/ 2in 130,000pixel LCD
- OTHER 640x480 video at 30fps, SD
- POWER 3.7V Li-Ion cell
- DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 102 x 63.5 x 19mm/140g

scores

PROS: Delightful design, speed of use

CONS: Noisy 'ordinary' images

TESTED MARCH 2005

features	15
ease of use	18
image quality	14
design	19
value	15

81%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

4 mega pixels

Contax U4R

Is it a hip-flask? No it's a hip camera

This model is one of the many reasons why WDC will regret Contax's withdrawal from the photography market. Its spec sheet reads like a real performance job and it looks mighty good.

Its shutter speed range is 1-1/2000sec and its aperture range of 2.8-4.7 is not bad for such a small camera. The lens is a 38-115mm equivalent and the 1/2.7in CCD is able to deliver images that are 2272x1704pixels – theoretically able to deliver A4 prints.

As well as the automatic still mode, there are eight scene modes. There is some element of manual control, and you can choose between single and continuous AF.

The speed of response and action is impressive. Focus snaps in, exposures are gauged quickly and the picture captured and recorded incredibly quickly compared with some other models. There is no viewfinder so all images have to be viewed on the 2in LCD. The pictures shot on auto ISO are all very noisy. Those that are shot on a low ISO tend to have a little camera movement – the U4R is so light and slight. When used in bright light, the results are much, much better, but still not quite right. Some 4MP cameras seem to provide images as good as 5MP cameras, but the U4R looks rather better than the images it produces.

VERDICT

The U4R can certainly live fast, it looks the part, and has a beautiful body. But it does not deliver the kind of quality one would expect. WDC

SANYO XACTI C5

£360 Estimated Street Price

RRP £499

- CCD 5.3MP Total 5.1MP effective
- LENS 38-190mm f/3.5-4.7
- SHUTTER SPEED 4-1/2000sec (1/30-1/10,000sec in video mode)
- EXPOSURE MODES Auto + 6 Scene
- ISO Auto (50-200) plus ISO 400 and 800
- FLASH Built-in GN 8
- VIEWFINDER/MONITOR None/2in LCD
- OTHER 1Gb SD included, video image stabilising
- POWER Li-Ion cells
- DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT 68 x 108 x 23mm/145g

scores

PROS: Excellent bright light performance

CONS: Suspect low-light focusing and noise

TESTED AUGUST 2005

features	16
ease of use	16
image quality	16
design	17
value	15

80%

View this camera 360° www.whatdigitalcamera.com

5 mega pixels

Sanyo Xacti C5

The C5 is a 5MP camera, just not as we know it

Is it a video camera? Is it a stills camera? Either way it's a pain to switch on with an awkwardly placed on/off button (under the LCD). In fact, this is a one-handed video/stills camera.

It records 30fps 640x480 pixels MPEG-4 movies at the press of a button. Press the still record button and you have a 5MP digital camera. There are six scene modes for still image shooting, an image stabilising system and a 1cm minimum shooting distance in macro mode. The battery is small with a shooting life of 113 images.

The provision of the 1Gb card makes battery life seem short, as the card can run out before the power. As if to justify this there is a 10MP recording mode, a pointless memory-gorging battery-wasting function.

There's no viewfinder but the LCD is clear enough to use, and it rotates, always useful in sunshine. But even with a two-handed grip and image stabilisation, the C5 is prone to camera shake. In sunshine, images are excellent, though the level of noise is high, but it has a nice, muted almost film-like grain look. At low light levels, focusing and accuracy suffered and, while exposures are well judged, the brighter the light the better. The low-power flash doesn't help. Macro image quality is very good.

VERDICT

Impressive still image quality in sunshine, but quality tails off once the light levels drop. WDC

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digital cameras

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CASIO EXILIM PRO EX-P700

£365 Estimated Street Price

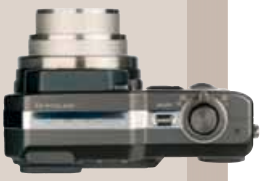
RRP £500

- **CCD** 7.1MP effective
- **LENS** 33-132mm
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 60-1/2000sec & B
- **ISO** Auto, 80-640
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, A, S, M, Best Shot, Movie, ±2EV
- **FLASH** 3.6m (W) 2.5m(T)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** OPT/ 2in LCD
- **OTHER** SD, 9MB Internal memory, calendar, album, world clock, alarm
- **POWER** Li-Ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 98 x 68 x 45mm/225g

7 mega pixels

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

top



The zoom control is located around the shutter release; the power switch sits alongside

front

The distinctive design is complemented by a bronzed gun-metal finish

side

Notice the PC socket at the bottom of the camera for attaching external flash

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

PENTAX 750Z

£400

scores

PROS: Features, handling, design

CONS: Vignetting, SD compatibility, slight noise problems, No RAW

TESTED JANUARY 2005

features	18
ease of use	17
image quality	17
design	18
value	18

88%

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Casio EX-P700

The performance of its predecessor with a 7MP chip

Casio's P600 has been given a makeover and new sensor, emerging as the Casio P700. What's the main difference between the old and new model? The major change is the new CCD. The P700 has a 1/1.8 inch 7.2 million pixel sensor instead of 6MP.

As for the lens it's a Canon 33-132mm f/2.8-f4 (35mm equivalent) optic with eight elements in seven groups including an aspherical lens. The zoom is powered, using a zoom control ring around the shutter release button. This means the focal lengths are stepped, which can be a hindrance to accurate framing, and can seem slow at times. The processor uses Casio's Stack MMC technology to reduce data flow time and save space, giving a start-up time of a couple of seconds. Shutter lag time is quoted by Casio as being 0.01 seconds. It certainly seems pretty spry in use, and the image appears on the monitor almost immediately. This speed is also reflected in the camera's burst mode, offering 3fps over five frames, with a continuous low resolution 16-up multi shot mode.

The P700 has an array of features built in including Casio's Best Shot mode. This is essentially an extended scene mode that includes all the regulars along with Soft-focus portrait, Food and a document option that straightens documents shot at an angle. There's a full complement of exposure options, including program AE, aperture and shutter priority AE modes and a manual mode. Exposure options also include ±2EV compensation and a new flash assist mode, which automatically adjusts flash images to compensate for any underexposed areas, not reached by the flash. For longer exposures the camera even has a B setting. Focus options are comprehensive too; the free focus mode allows you to select individual AF points.

The menu system is comprehensive and split over three sub-menus. Pressing the display button twice, the camera brings up a graphical user interface that looks more like a plane's cockpit panel. The main dial shows focus distance, with an aperture symbol, shutter symbol and white balance symbol joining it. You use the navigation buttons to switch between them and change settings, while a live histogram and the 2inch monitor reflects the changes. By the way, the camera doesn't work with all media cards, so stay away from the normally excellent SanDisk Ultra II cards.

In poor lighting conditions, the P700 managed to turn in some excellent images. The exposure system is very good, while colour is saturated but within the realms of good taste. Sharpness too is very good, with little sign of overcooking; edges look sharp but natural. Some vignetting is visible at the wide end of the lens, particularly at wide apertures. The Best Shot mode can improve some pictures, and even some of the more esoteric options are useful.

VERDICT

An astonishing amount of stuff crammed into a small space, while keeping handling and quality. It is fun to use and delivers the goods up to a point, with only a couple of minor issues spoiling its otherwise excellent performance. WDC

MONITOR
A nice 2in LCD screen with easy-to-read menus dominates the back of the camera. The menus are clear and definitive, and screen sharpness and brightness is very good

MODE DIAL
The main mode dial allows a choice of exposure options including the comprehensive Best Shot feature covering 27 subject-based modes

IN ASSOCIATION WITH JESSOPS

KONICA MINOLTA DIMAGE A200

£370 Estimated Street Price

RRP £549

- **CCD** 2/3inch RGB Color Interlace Scan array, 8.0 MP
- **LENS** 28-200mm f/2.8 -3.5
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 15 – 1/3200th sec
- **ISO** Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400, 800 ISO equivalent
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, P, A, S, M, four scene modes
- **FLASH** Built in/Hotshoe
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** EVF/1.8-inch Vari-Angle LCD
- **OTHER** CF Type I/II, 10fps, 40-frame buffer at 640x480 resolution, and 800x600 video
- **POWER** NP-800 Li-ion battery pack
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 114 x 80 x 115mm/505g

8 mega pixels

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

Konica Minolta DiMAGE A200

The latest in a line of SLR-style digicams

The Dimage 'bridge' cameras – that bridge the gap between high-end consumer and professional digital cameras – have evolved with the Dimage A1, the A2 and now the A200.

The A200's body plan is more or less unchanged from the original 2001 models upon which it is based. It is, however, smaller, and trimmed spec-wise compared with the A2, but still has an impressive specification.

The A200's 8MP, 2/3-inch interlace scan CCD boasts the company's excellent CCD-Shift, Anti Shake mechanism. The camera sports a 28-200mm (35mm equivalent), f2.8-3.5, 7x zoom GT APO 'all glass' lens that has two, moulded, aspherical and two 'AD' (Anomalous Dispersion) lens elements in its optical train, designed to help minimise lens flare, control chromatic aberration and image distortion. It has a tweaked 'CxProcess III' image-processing engine, designed to both reduce power consumption and improve the image quality.

All movie settings can shoot for up to 15 minutes or until the memory card is full. You get a 640x480-pixel, 30fps mode for 'TV quality' clips and a new 800x600-pixel mode at 15fps for enhanced movies The AF set-up offers a comprehensive, 11-zone AF. Other kit includes 10fps Ultra High Speed continuous shooting (but only at 640x480 resolution) for 40 frames, Adobe RGB colour space embedding in your shots, RAW+JPEG simultaneous shooting with standard, fine, extra-fine and RAW to back it up.

The A200's compact body is 60g lighter and a few millimetres smaller than the A2. The external controls have been much simplified. The body has a new 'Sure-Grip' surface that covers the key parts. The new body sculpting makes the whole ensemble easy to use and feel safe in the hand. The usual auto modes are accessed by the repositioned mode dial that offers access to the gamut of manual settings including aperture and shutter priority, the auto mode and scene modes.

There are a couple of handling niggles around the AF. First, it is surprisingly sluggish. The other problem is the 11-point, automatic wide-area AF. All too often it fails to select the correct part of the frame to focus on. For fast, reaction-style shots or pure point-and-shootability, it's not as fast or reliable as I had expected at this price.

The lens on the A200 is most accomplished and provides superbly detailed, colourful results anyone would be proud of. The 12-bit A/D conversion and the improved CX-Process III image engine all helps keep the colour true and clean, while noise is well controlled right up to ISO 400, slight problems only appear after at ISO 800. The RAW + JPEG simultaneous shooting provides plenty of scope for those wanting to get the most from the 8MP images and the 22.9MB JPEG files enable easy cropping and production of larger-scale prints, up to A2 at 150dpi. Overall, image quality is superb.

VERDICT

The A200 looks a mouth-watering prospect for those seeking a semi-professional level of spec in a compact, sleek-styled body. The improved image processing and its user friendliness, will appeal to the novice user moving up to better things. WDC

top

There's a mode dial, a drive button for setting the frame capture rate, and an on/off switch with its encircling capture, playback and movie mode switch

front

The self timer lamp/remote control receiver is the only feature on the front, apart from the lens

side

AF modes and a shift button provide fast access to focus mode changes and switching some buttons to their dual mode

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

OLYMPUS C-8080

£450

scores

PROS: Excellent optics and metering, image quality, handling, vari-angle LCD

CONS: AF foibles, sensitive shutter release

TESTED APRIL 2005

features	18
ease of use	17
image quality	18
design	18
value	17

88%

see more on the web

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VARI-ANGLE LCD

The addition of the vari-angle LCD makes the A200 much easier to use in bright light and makes handling for macro shots easier, for example

FUNCTION BUTTON

The 'FUNC' button provides the main access route to oft-used modes not already catered to in the camera's buttons. This extra menu has simplified the external control set-up (and probably saved some space to shrink the camera) and is easy to use

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PANASONIC LUMIX DMC-LX1

£370 Estimated Street Price

RRP £450

- **SENSOR** 1/1.65inch CCD (Total 8.61MP, Effective 8.4MP)
- **LENS** 28-112mm f/2.8-4.9
- **SHUTTER SPEEDS** 60-1/2000sec
- **EXPOSURE MODES** M, A, S, P + 14 scene
- **FLASH** Auto plus 6
- **ISO** Auto, 80-400
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** None/ 2.5inch 207,000 pixel TFT
- **OTHER** 848x480 30fps Video, SD, JPEG, RAW, TIFF
- **POWER** Lithium ion cell
- **DIMENSIONS/ WEIGHT** 106 x 56 x 25.5mm/185g

8 mega pixels

top

A switch on the lens changes the aspect ratio between 3:2, 4:3 and 16:9

front

The flash is manually popped up from its recessed position even in fully auto mode

side

The focusing modes of AF, AF macro and manual are selected by a switch on the side of the lens

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

FUJIFILM F810

£250

scores

PROS: Fully featured, unique CCD-format, all-round stonker
CONS: Noise can be an issue with such small pixel sites at over ISO 100, expensive

TESTED NOVEMBER 2005

features	19
ease of use	16
image quality	17
design	17
value	16

85%

see more on the web

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Panasonic DMC-LX1

This boasts the world's first true widescreen-format CCD

The 16:9 format, while a nice idea from a compositional perspective, is more attuned to TV display than 'proper' photos. The technological stride forward required to produce a chip that can capture these images is something else entirely.

In addition to this new size of chip of 1/1.65inches, the LX1 has a full panoply of features: optical image stabilisation, a full range of focusing and metering modes, useful focal-length range on the zoom and a shutter-speed range capable of dealing with anything but a rooftop fly-by from the Royal Air Force.

The LX1 has three focusing modes: macro AF, normal AF and manual focus. On the metering side there's a sophisticated multiple-area metering pattern as well as centreweighted and spot metering modes. There's exposure compensation as well in the automatic modes (Program, Shutter priority, Aperture priority and 14 scene modes). The lens has an aperture range of a wide-ish f/2.8 to a slightly dim f/4.9, which is where the optical image stabilisation comes into play, hopefully preventing the blurring caused by too slow a shutter speed in low light.

OIS (Optical Image Stabilising) reduces visible effects of camera shake. For long exposures or lots of camera movement it will not completely eliminate blurring. This mode offers a choice of aspect ratio. The difference here is that you get full resolution at the 16:9 aspect ratio, while the 4:3 and 3:2 images are ones where the unused pixels are simply that, rather than a 4:3 ratio. Switching to 16:9 means you retain image quality rather than losing it.

The 2.5in screen dominates the rear of the camera, with few controls disturbing the otherwise smooth lines. There is no optical viewfinder so the OIS comes in handy. Though the screen can be a bit cluttered, you can reduce the information on show. Image processing and general operation is speedy, when switched on the lens zips smoothly out to its 28mm position and is quiet and smooth at all points.

In performance terms the aspect ratio switching seems to affect the camera's exposure system. As there is less top and bottom in the scene, the area metering might be more likely to give a slightly darker result than the 4:3 or 3:2 images. The focusing system is very positive; manual in particular is a doddle to use. Higher pixel counts do not always guarantee better results. As the pixels become smaller, so they gather less light compared with lower-resolution models. Less light means the likelihood of slightly higher noise levels. The LX1 controls noise well, though in lower lighting the image starts to break down a little when fully magnified. The Leica lens delivers excellent optical resolution with little or no distortion, except at wideangle with very close shots and with the format set to the 16:9 aspect ratio.

VERDICT

An excellent camera in so many ways; it is hard to find a weak spot. Handling, despite the broad specification, is essentially pretty simple and performance shows no obvious problems. Add in a nice design, good build quality and you may just have a winner. WDC

DISPLAY BUTTON
This gives access to different levels of on-screen information including a 'rule of thirds' grid for compositions where true horizontals and verticals are important

BACKPLATE
The back-plate has both a joystick and a four-way button cluster. The latter is used more often but the joystick comes into play for the manual focusing

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KODAK EASYSHARE ONE

£400 Estimated Street Price

RRP £400

- **CCD** 4.23 MP CCD, 4.0 MP effective
- **LENS** 36-108mm f2.8-4.8
- **SHUTTER SPEEDS** 1/2 – 1/448th sec
- **ISO** Auto, 80, 100, 200, 400
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, 16 scene modes
- **FLASH** 0.6-3.2m (W) 0.6-2.3m (T)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** None/3inch TFT LCD, 230,000 pixels
- **OTHER** SD/MMC, 256Mb int, 640 x 480 movie clips
- **POWER** Lithium-ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 103 x 63 x 26mm/225g

4 mega pixels

top

Attractive two-tone white-silver, and thicker than expected

front

The front view gives no sign of the complexity and innovation lurking within

side

The back panel flips out on a hinge but, strangely, there's no catch to lock it against the body

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

NIKON P1 & P2

£250

scores

PROS: Big LCD, touch screen, built-in memory, Wi-Fi, simplicity
CONS: Battery consumption, so-so image quality, lack of manual control, pricey for 4MP

TESTED DECEMBER 2005

features	16
ease of use	18
image quality	15
design	17
value	16

82%

see more on the web

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Kodak Easyshare One

The world's first wi-fi digicam is packed with innovation

So what's so special about it? It's only got 4MP and a 3x zoom after all. Well for starters, the entire back of the camera swings out 180° and then swivels 180° to reveal a whopping 3in LCD screen. The menu on the EasyShare One is particularly large, for a good reason – it's a touch screen.

Nimble-fingered users can just prod the options they want or there's a handy stylus which slides neatly out of the side, so you can just tap your choices. It comes with a generous 256MB worth of built-in memory, eliminating the need for a media card for most users – though it has an SD card slot too. Wi-fi is built in, for wireless image transfer to your PC or printer (if wi-fi enabled), emailing or uploading to the Kodak Gallery website. You can do this at home or while supping on a skinny Mochachino in Starbucks.

Innovation and imagination should be rewarded, but there are one or two things which raise eyebrows from the off. First, the camera is rather bigger than it looks in pictures. It's very well-built and well finished with an all-metal construction, which also makes it quite heavy.

There are two ways to switch the camera on. If the LCD is facing inwards then just flip it out. If already facing out, then press the power button on the top. The former method takes eight seconds and the latter a barely-faster seven. Mercifully there's almost no shutter lag when taking a picture but the write time afterwards is about six seconds. To bypass this, there are two burst modes, 'First' (which takes five shots in rapid succession) and 'Last' (which keeps shooting while your finger's on the button and saves the last five when you let go). Neither of these modes works with flash.

You can change from auto mode to one of 16 scene modes by touching the screen. So far so good, but with such a big screen there's no viewfinder and even on a moderately bright day, the screen was hard to view, making framing difficult. It sucks up the power too – the battery died after just a day's shooting.

On the plus side, the menu is very well designed and contains some cool features, such as a qwerty keyboard for tapping out picture captions, email addresses and so forth. The share and set-up menus couldn't be simpler.

The 'One' doesn't enable selection of the level of compression or the file format, only the number of pixels. The highest, 4MP, isn't a lot but probably enough for the target audience of this camera. Edge definition falls away somewhat and there's prominent barrel distortion. The dreaded fringing also pops up around high-contrast edges, but on the plus side exposures were mostly spot on, with good retention of bright highlight detail and pleasing colour rendition.

VERDICT

Kodak should be applauded for creating such an innovative camera, even if the end result doesn't always succeed in every department. As a device for sharing pictures it is without equal, though not quite as good at taking them. Gadget fans will love it despite its shortcomings. WDC

WI-FI CARD
Pop it up like an aerial to activate wireless image transfer to a suitably enabled PC, printer or the Kodak Gallery website

3 INCH TOUCH SCREEN
To select the various modes and functions in both camera and playback mode, simply prod the screen with your fingers or the supplied stylus, which slides neatly into a slot on the side of the camera

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SONY CYBER-SHOT DSC-V3

£410 Estimated Street Price

RRP £499

- **CCD** 7.1MP effective
- **LENS** 34-136mm f/2.8-4
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 30-1/2000sec & B
- **ISO** 100-800
- **EXPOSURE MODES** M, A, S, P
- **FLASH** Built-in pop-up, Hotshoe
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Opt/ 2.5in LCD
- **OTHER** MS Pro, CF I, 300-point metering
- **POWER** InfoLithium
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 120 x 63 x 72mm/390g

7 mega pixels

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

top

A few big controls make the main functions easy to access

front

The unique flip-around flash is small and perfectly formed

side

The small socket accepts external flashes and a remote control tripod!

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

CANON G6

£380

scores

PROS: Quality, build, handling

CONS: A bit big for some, perhaps

features	18
ease of use	17
image quality	18
design	18
value	16

TESTED APRIL 2005

87%

see more on the web

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Sony Cyber-shot DSC-V3

Sony's immensely well-specified muscle camera

The Cybershot V3 is a much bigger model than the V1 in many respects. It has 7.1MP rather than a 5MP sensor, and a full range of exposure modes and manual overrides. It may lack the compact charm and metal finish of the V1, but it's solidly built and on a much bigger scale.

The focusing system offers the choice of manual, multiframe, single-frame AF and even a focus frame that you can position virtually anywhere within the image area. On the exposure side there are the stalwart manual, aperture priority, shutter priority and program modes, as well as a selection of scene modes for specific conditions. While on the digital side, the chip is a 7.4MP resolution model of which 7.2 million pixels are effective. It delivers an image that is 3072x2304pixels in size. The V3 also has movie shooting at 640x480 when used with a CompactFlash I card, but this improves to a fine version MPEG VX when using the Memory Stick Pro card. The cards are sensibly selected by means of a switch on the back of the camera for speed of operation rather than being buried in a menu somewhere. Add in Sony's Night-framing and Night Shot functions, and I really don't see what else they could have crammed into this machine.

The V3 is a muscular-looking camera and feels as if it is likely to last the course. Given the camera's complex specification, there are quite a few controls. The rather spiffy flash head spins on a horizontal access, positioned immediately behind the dedicated hotshoe on the top-plate. The main mode dial dominates the top-plate: it's a machined piece of metal that again reinforces the continual feeling of quality you pick up when you hold the V3. The optical viewfinder is centrally placed and the buttons used for controls are easy to locate and positive in action. This is not the speediest camera to switch on and get going but in terms of burst shooting, it offers plenty of options and manages to record a frame a second for 15 frames at the finest resolution and compression. Raw and Tiff modes inevitably take longer. At lower resolution you can take 2.5 frames per second.

The Carl Zeiss Vario-Sonnar lens moves smoothly through its 4x zoom range and focusing is both quick and informative. In play mode you can zoom in up to 5x on the image and in increments that are small enough to make the in-camera cropping facility a useful one. The screen itself is a thing of joy, with excellent contrast and colour.

Performance was on the whole excellent. There was a hint of noise in high-contrast highlight edge detail when the auto ISO function had been allowed to function. But the V3 came through a wide range of conditions with a fair degree of professionalism. Lens quality is good with no discernible flaring, distortion not rearing its head, and lens resolution being excellent. Colours were spot on, as was exposure.

VERDICT

This camera should not disappoint on any level. Thoroughly well designed and a worthy successor to the V1. It does what it does very well indeed and that alone is a proposition worth investing in. **WDC**

LCD
A big 2inch LCD screen clearly displays the imges, backed up by the traditional and centrally placed optical viewfinder. The menu system follows Sony's traditional layout of pop-up menus, and is easily read and understood

MODE DIAL
The main mode dial follows the style of the F8208, with a high-quality and milled edge for easy rotation

IN ASSOCIATION WITH JESSOPS

NIKON D50

£420 Estimated Street Price

RRP £550

- **SENSOR** 6.24MP CCD/6.1MP effective
- **LENS** Interchangeable
- **SHUTTER SPEEDS** 30-1/4000sec, bulb
- **ISO** 200-1600
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, P, A, S, M, Sc
- **FLASH** GN 15m (ISO200), hotshoe
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Opt/2in LCD
- **OTHER** SD, 3 Colour space, PictBridge, USB 2.0
- **POWER** Li-Ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 133 x 102 x 76mm/540g

6 mega pixels

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

top

The top-plate should be familiar to Nikon lovers, with little difference from that of the D70s, except a new scene mode

front

The D50 accepts Nikon F mount lenses. There's a conspicuous lack of depth-of-field preview, though

side

A rubber cover protects the ports, including the USB 2.0 connection

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

OLYMPUS E300

£570

scores

PROS: Simple, image quality, design and build, price
CONS: Lacks some features like depth of field preview, some minor colour issues

TESTED AUGUST 2005

features	16
ease of use	18
image quality	17
design	18
value	18

87%

see more on the web

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Nikon D50

A 6MP DSLR aimed at the enthusiast or family user

The Nikon D50 is a 6MP SLR which may initially appear to be a stripped-down D70, but actually still offers much more than basic operation. Chief among its highlights is the integration of Nikon's latest 3D colour matrix II metering system. The new version uses a 420-pixel RGB sensor to measure the scene, taking colour into account, while newly improved algorithms detect highlight and shadow details in the image and automatically compensate to prevent over or underexposure.

Exposure options include manual and automatic metering modes and assistance also comes from a histogram and over- and underexposure warnings in playback mode. There is the full complement of Program, Auto and Manual exposure modes. Situated on the top dial, the scene modes incorporate a new feature, Child mode, for taking pictures of children as they have different skin tones from adults. An advantage of digital photography is that scene modes don't just change shutter and aperture, but also colour balance, sharpening and contrast.

Talking of colour, the Nikon D50 is no slouch in that respect. There's a choice of Adobe RGB, sRGB and an enhanced sRGB for portraits. The D50 has more options to change colour, tone, sharpness and so on, buried within the menus. Other important settings that can be changed is the ability to select the file type, with the JPEG option allowing both different compression rates and image size. Nikon has still included a RAW option using its proprietary NEF (Nikon Electronic File) format.

The camera's sensitivity covers ISO 200 to 1600; the larger sensor means that in higher gain settings, noise is kept under control. A Noise Reduction setting in the menu is also useful for longer exposures at slow shutter speeds. One major feature of the D50's menu is the Help files, which explain each of the various settings.

The camera's external controls are kept to a minimum in order to keep the camera uncluttered and simple. Many of the controls have been shifted into the menu. The D50 has a drive mode that nearly matches that of its big brother, with a 2.5fps (frames per second) burst mode over a maximum of 137 frames before the buffer slows things down. The camera also uses a USB 2.0 connection, so download times are pretty nippy too.

Nikon has made a good job of the camera body, which is clad in polycarbonate, but big enough and heavy enough to feel substantial. The 2.0inch LCD is clear, but suffers in bright daylight. One thing lacking is a depth of field preview button, and the lack of external controls will be frustrating for experienced users. The camera is without the old PC socket for external flashguns, but there is a hotshoe, which accepts Nikon-dedicated flash units, and the camera also has a small built-in flash.

The D50 shoots in both RAW and JPEG mode and the latter in particular are very good. Sharpness is good, aided by the 18-55mm DX kit lens used for the test. Colour can be a little off, with a bias in certain subjects towards yellow, especially in landscapes, and saturation may be a little strong for some.

VERDICT

The ease of use will appeal to the family shooter. While the controls are stripped back, there's still plenty of menu options, and the camera's speed of operation will be bound to appeal. Overall, the camera puts in a good performance and will satisfy all but the most demanding users. **WDC**

LCD MONITOR
The LCD offers a 2in diagonal viewing size, with 130,000 pixels. While the screen size is welcome, it is difficult to see in harsh light

COMMAND DIAL
The thumb-controlled rear command dial is the main input for changing photographic settings, as well as allowing zooming on images via the LCD. There is no front command dial on the D50

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PANASONIC FZ30

£430 Estimated Street Price

RRP £550

- **SENSOR** 8.3MP/8MP effective
- **LENS** 35-420mm f2.8-3.7
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 60-1/2000sec
- **ISO** 80-400
- **EXP MODES** Auto, P, A, S, M, 14 Sc
- **FLASH** GN 7m (Auto), hotshoot
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** EVF/2in LCD
- **OTHER** SD, PictBridge, USB 2.0, Mega OIS, RAW, TIFF, JPEG
- **POWER** Li-Ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 141 x 86 x 138 mm/740g

top

The camera looks like an SLR. Notice the manual zoom and focus rings on the lens. Very nice

front

That lens dominates the front, but you can just make out the dial on the grip

side

A set of buttons on the side of the lens access the focus options, from manual to auto to macro

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

CANON PRO 1

£420

scores

PROS: Good feature set, better handling than ever, EVF

CONS: Noise at higher ISO, camera shake, menu-based features, RAW conversion

TESTED NOVEMBER 2005

features	18
ease of use	17
image quality	17
design	16
value	17

85%

see more on the web

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8 mega pixels

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

Panasonic FZ30

Panasonic has beefed up an old favourite

This is the sixth incarnation of the FZ range, and each new model has continued to impress. However, competition is more intense, with most manufacturers now offering similarly specified cameras with long lenses – the so-called Superzoom cameras.

The monster 35-420mm Leica lens has a manual focus ring which, in MF mode, works in conjunction with an enlarged central portion of the viewfinder to allow for fine and accurate manual focusing. A new addition is a manual zoom ring allowing more precise, smoother zooming. The AF too, has been revamped, with a choice of focusing points, with a nine-point sensor, and increased AF speed.

When zooming or focusing, things are much clearer in the new electronic viewfinder, which has an increased pixel count of 230,000 pixels, making viewed scenes sharper and clearer. This and an improved refresh rate make this the best EVF yet seen on a Panasonic. Similarly the 2in LCD has had a revamp; it's a flip-and-twist type, which offers protection for the screen and allows viewing from unusual or awkward angles. Again the screen has had a resolution upgrade, allowing better detail checking of taken images. An increase in luminance provides better viewing in low light.

A major addition is the inclusion of RAW files, rather than only JPEG recording. This is also backed up by TIFF, which writes to the card remarkably quickly. Panasonic's Venus II processor is present, which offers a fast start-up time of 0.97seconds, and a 0.01sec shutter lag, making the camera much more responsive than its predecessor. Further improvements include a selection of 14 scene modes, plus manual, shutter priority AE, aperture priority AE, program AE and auto. Camera handling in manual and AE modes has been improved by the inclusion of two control dials on the front and back of the body, replacing the awkward shift-type buttons of the earlier models.

The FZ30 is bigger and almost 50% heavier than the FZ20 and this lends the camera gravitas. The camera is quite light on external controls, and some oft-needed controls need to be accessed from the menu, but zooming and manual focus are much improved. Continuous AF could be faster: the camera struggles to find and stay focused on moving subjects, while single-servo focusing is fine if the subject is reasonably static. An area that excels is video mode; it is smooth and the luminance of the capture is excellent, even in low light.

One of the good things about the FZ30 is that in RAW mode, a low compression JPEG is included, so even if you can't open the RAW file in Photoshop, you can open a JPEG at least. The JPEGs though, are generally very good, as long as you keep the ISO down to 80 or 100; at ISO 200, noise comes in.

Colours are good, though white balance seemed a tad on the cold side in shady conditions. Sharpness is good too, although I'd exercise caution at the long end of the lens, because there is still a danger of camera shake even using the Mega OIS. This is possibly due to the 8MP sensor. Primary colours record very well, and more subtle tones reproduce nicely.

VERDICT

Features and specs are good and with care the FZ30 can produce excellent results. However, it suffers from noise after ISO 200, and the increased resolution makes camera shake more likely. Fun to use though and feels more professional than ever. **WDC**

LCD
The FZ30 continues to use a 2inch screen, but Panasonic has added a flip-and-twist type, so images can be taken from low or high angles and the screen can be folded inwards to the body for protection

REAR COMMAND DIAL
Works in conjunction with a front dial. This allows the user to make quick and easy changes to camera settings such as aperture and shutter

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FUJIFILM FINEPIX S9500

£440 Estimated Street Price

RRP £500

- **CCD** 9.2MP Total, 9MP effective
- **LENS** 28-300mm f/2.8-4.9
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 1/4-1/4000sec
- **ISO** 80-1600
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, M, A, S, P + 5 Scene, Mov
- **FLASH** Built-in, Hotshoe
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** EVF/ 1.8in 235,000 pixel LCD
- **OTHER** xD and CF I & II slots
- **POWER** 4x AA
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 128 x 93 x 129mm/645g

9 mega pixels

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

top

The top-plate is reminiscent of an SLR, with mode dial and deep grip. There's also a hotshoe for external flash units

front

The 28-300mm lens is the dominant feature on the front

side

Ports covering USB and remote cable socket can be seen. A focus mode switch is also here

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

PANASONIC FZ30

£430

scores

PROS: Low noise, good features

CONS: Some quirky handling, expensive

TESTED DECEMBER 2005

features	18
ease of use	17
image quality	17
design	17
value	17

86%

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Fujifilm Finepix S9500

The S9500 boasts a 9MP sensor. That's just for starters

So far as bridge cameras go, Fujifilm has a long tradition stretching right back to the Finepix 4900 in 2000. That camera has been transformed several times, and now there's the 9MP Finepix S9500.

The 9MP sensor is the first of another breed of Fujifilm's SuperCCDs. It doesn't have any of the interpolation features found in some previous chips, so what do we get from 9MP of raw imaging power? A maximum print size of 17x 13 inches (at 200dpi) and promise of sharper prints at smaller sizes. Fujifilm has incorporated its Real Photo Technology into the S9500. The camera can be used in lower light than other cameras and – because faster shutter speeds can be used as a result – camera shake and subject movement can be halted at capture.

In other respects the camera is pretty well specified. The lens covers a versatile range without being too big. It uses a manual zoom control: a ring around the edge of the lens with a nicely ridged grip allows for accurate zooming. However, the resolution of the electronic viewfinder (EVF) hinders really precise focusing, so there is a lack of detail. The EVF is somewhat problematic in general use too, thanks to a rather severe flicker which can be quite annoying.

The AF system is somewhat better, and hits the mark pretty much every time. There's a choice of multi, spot and wide area focusing, with single and continuous focus options included. Exposure options are fairly standard: there's manual, aperture priority, shutter priority and program, as well as auto and a collection of five scene modes and card-dependent unlimited talking-picture mode, or movie as the young folks call it now.

The menu has some useful functions and can be reached quickly, wherein lie such gems as the ISO and Chroma settings. Fujifilm has got the balance about right on most aspects of camera navigation. External buttons control EV adjustment, drive mode, AE-Lock, flash, metering and autofocus. Everything else is tucked away safely in the menu.

The S9500 does a good job on smaller prints, but if you go the whole hog and print at A3 size, there is a lack of detail, especially in the shadow areas. On the plus side though, the camera does a great job of controlling noise: there's not a massive difference between ISO 400 and 1600, which really is impressive. Colour is good too, though I prefer the chrome look to the standard. This colour setting is supposed to replicate slide film, such as Velvia or Provia. While the images look nice and bright, I'd hazard to say that they are ever so slightly overexposed. In addition, the multi metering isn't as accurate as that of some other cameras. Finally, fringing raises its ugly purple head on occasion, but only in extreme contrast.

VERDICT

There's a lot to like about the S9500, not least its overall feel. I have certain problems with the images but, with forethought, they can be overcome. More important, though, the lack of noise in images is stunning. Overall it's not half bad. **WDC**

LCD MONITOR
The LCD is a flip-out type offering overhead and low shooting but no rotation

FUNCTION BUTTON
The 'f' button accesses useful, oft used functions such as image quality, white balance and ISO. Oddly, RAW mode is not here, but it really should be

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NIKON COOLPIX 8400

£440 Estimated Street Price

RRP £650

- **CCD** 8MP effective
- **LENS** 24-85mm
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 8-1/3000sec
- **ISO** 50-400
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, A, S, M, Sc, ±2EV, Mov
- **FLASH** Built in/Hotshoe
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** EVF / 1.8in LCD
- **OTHER** CF, swivel LCD, 2.3fps over five frames, RAW, TIFF, JPEG
- **POWER** Li-Ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 113.6 x 82.2 x 75mm/400g

8 mega pixels

Nikon 8400

Nikon's new 8MP model features a uniquely wide lens

Nikon's second-generation 8MP cameras, the 8800 and this, the 8400, were redesigned, with the optics refined to match the sensor, so problems experienced with the first generation should now be fixed. That's the principle anyway.

What's remarkable about it though is this lens, which has a 35mm equivalent of 24-85mm. This is the first time a camera with a sensor this small has seen such a wide angle of view. The other advantage is its size. It is more akin in size to a 35mm rangefinder camera so it could hardly be described as a pocket camera, though it will fit in a coat pocket with ease.

The build quality, with its magnesium alloy body, places it into a more serious bracket. The camera feels very tough and imbues the user with a sense of confidence that it could withstand a few knocks. On board the camera are standard modes: manual and semi automatic modes, including aperture priority AE, shutter priority AE and manual. These are backed up by program mode with shift, allowing the user to make changes to shutter and aperture settings, with the camera automatically making the reciprocal changes.

There's a choice of burst modes, including continuous shooting over 2.3fps for 5 frames. These are joined by a selection of focus modes, which offer single and continuous focusing, along with manual. The camera has a new feature in the D-Lighting mode, used for adjusting images of high contrast; as well as an automatic in-camera redeye removal tool.

At last Nikon has put right one of my recurring gripes about its predecessors – it has a proper mode dial. Now, changing between exposures modes can be executed at the turn of the top dial, without the multi button pushing of previous models. However, the rear function dial, just below the mode dial, is badly positioned. Back to the positives though: the camera feels chunky, solid and secure, with a deep right grip.

The back of the camera has a swivelling 1.8in LCD screen, which is clear and bright, though starting to look a bit small by current standards. The electronic viewfinder is clear and bright too, but again, small. The built-in flash is adequate for snap shots; I'd advise investing in a separate Nikon Speedlight flashgun if you have ambitions to shoot decent flash pictures.

This is a sharp camera, with probably better detail than previous models. Nikon seems to be learning that people don't want to tweak their shots too much, they like to take and print them. Colour is good, and contrast is well maintained. There's some fringing present in the images, though mainly in high-contrast areas and in the corners when the lens is set to 24mm. Scene modes are very good: I took a few shots of fireworks on Bonfire Night and achieved better pictures than I could have alone.

VERDICT

Although not perfect, the Coolpix 8400 is a considerable improvement, with better handling, better pictures and a really useful lens. There are still issues with moderate fringing and some noise at the higher sensitivities but all in all, a very nice camera. WDC

top

Notice the all-inclusive mode dial. I say 'Thank you Nikon', some may say, 'About time'

front

The redesigned flash gun pops out of the top of the top-plate

side

The hinge mechanism at the back is for the swivelling LCD monitor

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

CANON G6

£380

scores

PROS: 24mm lens, functional, build quality

CONS: Some fringing and noise, overly complicated menus

features	19
ease of use	17
image quality	17
design	18
value	18

TESTED JANUARY 2005

89%

see more on the web

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LCD SCREEN
The 1.8-inch LCD is looking small compared to some new cameras but it's on a swivel hinge. Menus are rather complicated, with a lot of headers and sub menus
REAR CONTROL DIAL
Use this to change camera settings such as aperture, shutter and sensitivity
Nikon
MENU
QUICK
DISP
MF—AF

IN ASSOCIATION WITH JESSOPS

PENTAX *IST DL

£460 Estimated Street Price

RRP £550 BODY

- **SENSOR** 6.31MP, 6.1MP effective
- **LENS** Interchangeable
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 30 - 1/4000sec + bulb
- **ISO** 200-3200
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, A, S, M + Auto and seven PICT modes
- **FLASH** Pop-up and TTL hotshoe
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** TTL Optical /2.5in 210,000pixel TFT LCDS
- **OTHER** SD storage, RAW, JPEG
- **POWER** Four AA or two CRV-3
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 125 x 92.5 x 67mm/470g

6 mega pixels

top

Simple welcoming top-plate with the minimum of fuss is not off-puttingly complex

front

The £650 kit price tag includes the 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 lens

side

The remote control, PC connection/video out and DC-in sockets are hidden beneath a flap

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

NIKON D50

£420

scores

PROS: Simple to use, great results

CONS: RAW processing software limited

TESTED SEPTEMBER 2005

features	17
ease of use	18
image quality	18
design	18
value	18

89%

see more on the web

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WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

Pentax *ist DL

The new 6.1MP digital starter SLR from Pentax

The *ist DL is a small, nippy, silver-coloured DSLR that is easy to use, but has a wealth of features for the confident photographer.

The on/off switch is around the shutter release button at the top of the substantial handgrip and if you push this switch beyond 'on' it gives you a preview of the depth of field you will get in your final image via the optical through-the-lens viewfinder.

The shutter is of the focal plane variety and has a useful range of 30-1/4000sec plus bulb. The bulb mode has its own position on the mode dial, along with program, aperture priority, shutter priority and manual modes.

Also on the top-plate are the exposure compensation button, an auto exposure lock and the flash activation button. This last causes the built-in flash to pop up. The chip is a 23.5x15.7 6.31MP chip that delivers 6.1 million effective pixels at its maximum image size of 3008x2008 – enough for an impressive 15x10in print at 200ppi.

Images can be saved as JPEGs or Pentax proprietary PEF RAW files. The menu button gives you access to four menus: Record, playback, set-up and custom. The menu makes it easy to find and change functions.

There is an LCD top-plate display that shows the fundamentals of photographic information, and a second smaller LCD under the image area in the viewfinder. The *ist DL is pretty nippy: it's speedy to switch on, focus and meter, and it can capture up to three frames per second at its highest quality JPEG setting in continuous mode.

All in all, then, this is a very easy camera to use. In its simplest configuration – ie set to Auto pict mode – you can just switch the camera on and you're ready to shoot virtually instantly. You can review images at any point by pressing the international standard green arrow button, and return to capture mode by pressing the same button or by pressing the shutter release half-way down.

While the exterior of the camera is obviously a polymerous plastic, the heft of the camera tells you that there is a sturdy metal chassis beneath. There's no flex in the body and the lens mount is perfectly machined to fit onto the interchangeable lenses.

On the handling side, button placement is sensible and the buttons themselves have a positive click to them when pressed. The sculpting of the back of the camera and the handgrip make for a camera that is very easy to hold and use too.

The focusing performance is absolutely brilliant. The Auto-Exposure lock allows you to take control when you think the camera is going to get it wrong. The camera does not let you simultaneously record JPEG and RAW. Furthermore, the Pentax laboratory software is significantly less useful than other examples of this type of post-processing program.

In the absence of an Adobe Photoshop plug-in for the DL at the time of writing, I'd rather stick to shooting fine JPEGs. You get more on a card and you get them quicker.

Noise is very well controlled indeed. Defocused elements are pleasantly soft and those elements that are sharp are pleasingly so. White balance detection and selection were excellent. Image detail in general is excellent and the camera does very well on detail that is less obvious.

VERDICT

This is a very good digital camera indeed. It takes good pictures with a minimum of fuss and is designed in such a way that pretty much anyone with a right hand could use it. The handling is positive, the results are impressive and the camera is well-made. WDC

MENUS

There are four menus that the user can access at the push of the menu button. Each gives you access to well-grouped functions for speed of access

2.5-INCH LCD

This monster-sized monitor has but one failing: that for left-eye-viewing reviewers the combination of sunscreen and sweat may cause it to become less than pristine

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KONICA MINOLTA DYNAX 5D

£500 Estimated Street Price

RRP £600

- **SENSOR** 6.3MP/6.1MP effective
- **LENS** Minolta A mount
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 30-1/4000sec, bulb
- **ISO** 100-3200
- **EXP MODES** Auto, P, A, S, M, Sc
- **FLASH** GN 15m (ISO200), hotshoe
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Opt/2.5in LCD
- **OTHER** CF 1&II, 3 Colour space, PictBridge, USB 2.0, Anti-Shake CCD
- **POWER** Li-Ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 130.5 x 92.5 x 66.5mm/590g

6 mega pixels

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

top

The camera is a little boxy in design, particularly when viewed from the top

front

The low profile pentaprism is the result, in a completely new mirror and reflex design

side

The pull flash rises from the pentaprism. A remote control socket is on the side

Konica Minolta Dynax 5D

Konica Minolta's second DSLR is a bargain

Konica Minolta's second consumer DSLR, well priced to compete with other entry-level DSLRs, has something the others don't – an Anti-Shake CCD. The camera maintains features of the Dynax 7D, but in a simplified format. It is a less intimidating camera but still as comprehensive.

The sensor is that of the 7D: an APS-C sized 6.3 million pixel CCD, offering 6.1 million effective pixels, backed up by an Advanced LSI high-speed image processor, and the CxProcess III system, claimed to render fine image detail and good colour rendition. It works on four key elements of the image: sharpness, colour, gradation reproduction and noise reduction, mounted on the Anti-Shake cradle, which Konica Minolta claims allows the user 2-3 stops slower shutter speeds. The 5D has a large, bright 2.5inch LCD screen – an auto-orientation system displays the information in horizontal or vertical format. Where the 5D strays into new territory is the inclusion of five scene modes, the Digital Subject Program Selector. The feature is found in the ISO menu, and sets high-key subjects at ISO 200 and low key at ISO 80.

The 5D maintains a welcome amount of white balance control as well as WB bracketing and fine tuning. More conventional is a shutter range of 30sec to 1/4000sec and Bulb for longer exposures. The sensitivity range also covers a decent ISO 100-3200, with noise reduction as an option to hide some of the more intrusive speckling that can occur at high ISOs or long exposures. The metering sensitivity operates over +1 to +20EV, while the AF has an AF assist lamp to help in darker conditions.

For continuous shooting the 5D offers up to 3fps over 10 frames. Other features include auto exposure bracketing and exposure compensation over ±2EV, with 1/3-stop increments, and a built-in flash, in this case a pull-up type in the pentaprism, helping keep the camera small. This camera sits nicely in the hand. The kit lens is a new AF DT 18-70mm, smaller and lighter than previous ones. The 5D is quite angular but the grip is comfortable, with plenty of purchase. The controls are all within easy reach of the forefinger and the back of the camera is remarkably uncluttered.

A reasonable viewfinder shows 95% of the scene, with information fairly limited but there's enough for most users, and everything else can be seen on the back LCD. At 2.5ins, it's as big as you need and the information displayed on it is both relevant and accessible. The 5D is very capable, and does a good job of capturing the quality of light, the images reflect the colour of light throughout the day, so the afternoon light keeps that warm yellow glow in the images. The camera offers JPEG and RAW recording, with an option to capture both simultaneously. The camera is capable of producing pin-sharp images in JPEG mode, but RAW will need a little help.

VERDICT

A technically advanced but surprisingly simple camera, this is a stripped-down 7D with new additions. Bonus points to the comprehensive white balance system and well-designed controls. Image quality doesn't disappoint. Handheld images are helped by the Anti-Shake CCD, but don't be blasé, you still need to keep the camera as still as possible while using it. **WDC**

up against

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NIKON D70S

£580

scores

PROS: Anti-Shake, white balance, ISO range, size

CONS: Some problems with high-contrast scenes using scene modes

TESTED OCTOBER 2005

features	18
ease of use	17
image quality	18
design	17
value	19

89%

see more on the web

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LCD MONITOR
With a 2.5inch diagonal, the screen is big, and shooting information is clear. The menu text is quite small, though

FUNCTION
Konica Minolta has taken away the external buttons and added the function button, to access such things as the metering and AF buttons, as well as digital effects and custom modes

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NIKON COOLPIX 8800

£520 Estimated Street Price

RRP £700

8 mega pixels

- **CCD** 2/3" RGB 8.3MP Total/8.0 MP Effective
- **LENS** 35-350mm f/2.8 – f/5
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 8 – 1/3000 sec & B
- **ISO** Auto, 50, 100, 200, 400
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Auto, P, A, S, M, Sc, Mov, ±2EV
- **FLASH** Built in/Hotshoe
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** EVF/1.8in Vari-Angle LCD
- **OTHER** CF Type I/II, 2.3fps, PictBridge
- **POWER** Li-ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 116 x 85 x 121 mm/680g

top

The addition of a proper mode dial with easy access to shooting modes has made the 8800 easier to use than its predecessors

front

This is dominated by the big front element of the 35-350mm vibration-reduction lens

side

Only a couple of buttons spoil the lines of the left side, including the AF function and VR button

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

CANON PRO 1

£440

scores

PROS: Lens, compact, handling

CONS: Image noise, limited sensitivity

features	19
ease of use	17
image quality	16
design	17
value	17

TESTED APRIL 2005

86%

see more on the web

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WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

Nikon Coolpix 8800

Nikon's second-generation 8MP SLR-style camera

From its first-generation Coolpix 8700, Nikon has firmly embraced the 8MP format by re-leasing two new cameras, the Coolpix 8400 with a 24-85mm lens, and the 8800 with a 35-350mm equivalent lens with the added bonus of Vibration Reduction. This is the first time we have had a VR lens on a Nikon digital camera. The system uses gyroscopes in the lens to correct for lens movement caused by camera shake, allowing slower shutter speeds to be used handheld.

The first thing you notice about the 8800 is its size. The magnesium alloy body is small and belies the power of the zoom contained in the barrel at the front of the body. The optics are fairly small but bright. There are 8.3million pixels on an 8.8x6.6mm chip. Of these, 8million are effective to make a maximum image size of 3264 x 2448 pixels. This is a prosumer camera, and so it needs to have plenty of control options. These include auto and program exposure for pointing-and-shooting, and the full complement of manual and semi-automatic controls. The camera offers a fairly pedestrian ISO 50-400, but has an im-pressive shutter covering 1/3000 to 8sec and a bulb option for longer timed exposures.

Nikon has provided scene modes and a movie mode with audio. White balance offers the choice of auto or a set of seven preset options as well as a manual setting and fine tuning control. Files can be recorded as the ubiquitous JPEG or you could choose to shoot in RAW and process the images yourself. The 8800 is one of the few remaining cameras offering the TIFF format.

The bulk of the weight is in the lens, which does make it slightly uneven to hold one-handed. But it's a sturdy little beast and feels fairly comfortable. The left side is thankfully free of too many buttons, so if you shoot in a portrait format, there is little chance of accidentally changing any settings. Nikon has vastly improved the handling and mode access over previous models. The main mode dial has the choice of manual, program, shutter priority and aperture priority as well as full auto.

Battery life has also improved radically, and we got by with only one recharge over the two weeks and 300 pictures that constituted the WDC test.

The images are also much improved, but not yet perfect. The camera's handling of chromatic aberra-tion is improved and none of the images showed any signs of the dreaded purple fringing. Lens distortion was a concern but overall the 8800 remains free of any serious problems. Signal-to-noise ratio is a worry: at ISO 100 there is little noise, but as you move up to ISO 200 and to ISO 400, there is a marked increase. It's better than the Nikon 8700, but the speckly grain is still present and often distracting. On the plus side, the colour and exposure produced is consistently good, while the AF never fails to hit the spot.

VERDICT

A really usable camera with positive points like its size, the VR lens and improved handling. It is bound to appeal to those users who don't want the weight of an SLR but do want the increased control. **WDC**

LCD
The swivel screen is useful for shooting at odd angles and folds inwards to protect the monitor

VIEWFINDER
The 8800 uses an electronic viewfinder, with a video feed directly off the sensor. You can also view the menu from here. There is dipotre adjustment for spectacle wearers

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Nikon

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Fuji SC-F10	£12.90	Sony LCS-THC	£29.90

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CANON EOS 350D

£530 Estimated Street Price

RRP £749

- **SENSOR** 8.3MP, 8MP effective, CMOS
- **LENS** Canon EF/EF-S mount
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 30-1/4000sec + B
- **ISO** 100-1600
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, A,S, M, A-DEP, Auto, 5 Scene
- **FLASH** Hotshoe, GN 13m (ISO 100)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Optical and 1.8in 115,000 pixel LCD
- **OTHER** CF types I&II, 9 custom functions, USB2.0, RAW+JPEG
- **POWER** Rechargeable Li-ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 126.5 x 94.2 x 64mm/485g

8 mega pixels

top

The 350D has a relatively small grip. The drive button from the 300D has been moved to the back

front

The built-in flash sits quite high to reduce redeye. The front is otherwise uncluttered by controls

side

Connections include USB 2.0. The depth of field button is at the base of the lens mount

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

NIKON D70

£580

scores

PROS: Features, fast, performance, image quality

CONS: LCD monitor, some button placements, images a bit soft at default settings

features	18
ease of use	18
image quality	18
design	17
value	19

TESTED MAY 2005

90%

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Canon EOS 350D

Canon's 300D replacement is a winner

The launch of the EOS 300D in 2003 was a landmark moment. It was the first digital SLR for under £1000 and consumer DSLR aimed entirely at the amateur enthusiast – and it sold in vast numbers.

The 350D is not just an upgrade from the 300D, it's more like a complete redesign. The new body was, at 485g, the lightest DSLR when launched. The DIGIC II processor offers faster processing, better image quality and longer battery life. Power-up time is 0.2 seconds and continuous shooting is 3fps. The control layout is broadly similar to the 300D. The drive button is now on the back, but the other changes are on the inside, and there are lots of them. Users can now directly select the metering and AF modes independently of the exposure mode chosen. Canon has also added a selection of nine custom functions, controlling such things as whether you want your exposure compensation in 1/3rd or 1/2 stop increments. With improved white balance fine tuning, a choice of two preset and three customisable parameter sets and the addition of flash exposure compensation, it seems that the words 'User Control' must have been writ large in the designers' workshop.

The 350D uses a single NB-2LH Lithium-Ion cell. Thanks to the power-saving of the DIGIC II processor Canon claims that the overall battery life is about the same as the 300D, despite its lower capacity. In use the 350D is very responsive. Start-up is almost instantaneous though processing can take a while, especially when shooting RAW and JPEG together, but the buffer is large enough that it doesn't interfere with normal shooting.

The viewfinder is bright and clear, with a good data display. Exposure from the 35-zone evaluative metering was very consistent.The camera's interpretation of colour temperature was usually spot on, using auto white balance. The built-in flash provides coverage to 17mm and proved accurate, and flash exposure compensation control is available via the menu. The 1.8in TFT screen can be difficult to see in bright sunlight, and when you magnify images in review mode they never look very sharp, even when you know they are. Exposures are generally spot on, even under difficult lighting conditions. Images contain a full tonal range and there's no problem with highlight detail. Skin tones and colour are very good too, displaying just the right amount of saturation and warmth to appeal to the average punter. Colours in general are fairly natural and if you want the most neutral colour, shooting RAW is the best way to go.

Images can be slightly soft, but a small tweak in Unsharp Mask is all that's needed to bring out the details and give the images some snap. The DIGIC processor and CMOS sensor once again prove their worth with some of the best high-sensitivity images I've ever seen on a consumer DSLR. At ISO 400 you have to really look for the noise to find it and, even at ISO 800 and ISO 1600, images are quite acceptable.

VERDICT

Canon has risen to the challenge laid down by its rivals. The EOS 350D is a very good camera indeed: well designed, fast, accurate, brimming with features and producing great results. **WDC**

DUAL LCD
The top screen provides data about exposure settings, battery status and other settings, though not the ISO or exposure mode selected

TFT SCREEN
Perhaps the weakest link on the 350D: low resolution (115,000 pixels) and hard to see in bright sun

DRIVE BUTTON
This button was on the top-plate on the 300D. Its placement here is bad news for left-eye viewers, who can activate the self-timer with their nose by mistake

OLYMPUS E-300

£570 Estimated Street Price

RRP £700

- **CMOS** 8.88MP, 8MP effective
- **LENS** 4/3 Mount interchangeable
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 30-1/4000sec
- **ISO** 100-400 (plus 800 and 1600)
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, A, S, M, + 5 dial scene and 14 Scene
- **FLASH** Pop-up and dedicated hotshoe
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** TTL optical and 1.8in 134,000 pixel TFT LCD
- **OTHER** CF types I&II, RAW mode, PictBridge
- **POWER** 1500mAh Lilon cell
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 146.5 x 85 x 64mm/580g

8 mega pixels

top

All the controls on the top-plate are collected on the right-hand side

front

Behind the 4/3rds mount lens is a laterally hinged reflex mirror

side

The other side of the E-300 hides a CFI/II card slot that accepts Microdrives

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

NIKON D70

£580

scores

PROS: 8MP, exposure accuracy, battery life

CONS: Bulky, slow write times, some noise

features	18
ease of use	18
image quality	17
design	16
value	18

TESTED MARCH 2005

87%

see more on the web

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Olympus E-300

The second 4/3rds DSLR from Olympus

At the launch of the 4/3rds system, great play was made of the fact that the 4/3rds cameras would be able to be smaller than those based on a 35mm body. The E-300, second in the E-series, is larger in two dimensions than the Nikon D70.

However, the most arresting thing about the E300 is the 8.8MP 4/3rds CCD chip of which 8million pixels are effective, delivering a 3264x2448pixel image in JPEG, TIFF or RAW formats. Exposure is by means of one of the four usual modes, and metering is by means of Olympus's ESP, centre-weighted metering or a 2% spot metering function. The focusing is a three-point horizontally arranged phase-detection system and has four modes. Image viewing is by means of the horizontal-mirrored reflex method that uses a porroprism, usually seen on binoculars, rather than the usual interchangeable-lens SLR's pentaprism. The button positioning and the basic functionality of the E-300 is not dissimilar to many of the Camedia family. Controls are well-placed and sufficiently well-marked. I kept cursing the AF system until I realised that what I was asking it to focus on was at less than the minimum focusing distance of the lens at which point, my view of the E-300's AF system improved mightily. Any image with less than half of it taken up by sky will be as near as damnit perfectly exposed by the ESP metering with the possible exception of a subject that was incredibly reflective at the centre of the frame. That should probably be a manual override exposure situation anyway. The last bit of field performance is the battery life which was pretty impressive.

How well does the electronic side of things hold up? A brief answer is unspectacularly well, as initially you look at your results when shot at the default AUTO position of ISO. Shoot at this setting and you may well be underwhelmed by the performance. Noise is evident in images captured at ISO 400. Switch to ISO 100 and think of other ways to get the exposures without using an increase in gain, and you start to get significantly subtler and better results. After an unpromising beginning, I found myself really rather impressed with the E-300's performance.

At ISO 100 the E-300 delivers pictures full of subtle tones and rich colours. Some images might need a touch of sharpening to reach their very best. As the ISO level is upped noise is less well controlled. I found the noise at ISO400 unacceptable. Images shot at long exposures have a delightfully smooth appearance. Depth of field varies as it should with aperture, and defocused areas appear naturally rendered. In general I didn't see a huge difference between images captured in RAW mode, TIFF and those at the finest JPEG compression. Given the relative difference in recording time and memory storage required for these formats, JPEG is probably favourite.

VERDICT

You may need to turn some of the automatic features off to get the best results. More sophisticated cameras have manual overrides because even manufacturers appreciate that sometimes the user is more likely to be right than an automatic system. **WDC**

FUNCTION BUTTONS
Flash, white balance, image quality and user info can all be selected at the press of a single button

RIGHT BUTTON CLUSTER
Metering pattern, exposure compensation, AF mode and ISO can all be selected from this cluster of four buttons, which also act as the Up/Down Left/Right controls in review mode

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PENTAX *IST DS

£570 Estimated Street Price

RRP £700

- **SENSOR** 6.31MP total, 6.1MP effective
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 30-1/4000sec
- **ISO** 200-3200
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, A, S, M + Auto and 6 Scene
- **FLASH** Pop-up and TTL hotshoe
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** TTL optical and 2in 210,000 pixel LCD
- **OTHER** SD, 18 custom functions, depth of field preview
- **POWER** 4xAA rechargeable or 2xCRV3 cells
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 125 x 92.5 x 66mm/505g

6 mega pixels

top

The top-plate could belong to a film SLR as it betrays none of the digital wares of the *ist DS

front

A plain face but attractive curves and lines keep the camera simple and stylish

side

Manual focus and autofocus are selected by means of a simple switch by the lens

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

NIKON D70

£580

scores

PROS: Excellent image quality for pixel count

CONS: Few to mention

features	18
ease of use	17
image quality	17
design	18
value	18

TESTED MARCH 2005

88%

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Pentax *ist DS

It's unpronounceable but is the *ist DS any good?

The '*ist' name has been the butt of jokes in most reviews, and now an S has been added to the D in the name for an entry-level model.

Whatever the name's reasoning, the camera's purpose is straightforward, to offer an inexpensive means into the world of digital SLR photography.

The camera's chip is an APS-sized sensor of 6.3MP pixels of which 6.1MP are effective. It produces an image 3008x2008 pixels in size in RAW, or one of three levels of JPEG compression and with a sensitivity range of ISO 200-3200. As well as these shooting modes, the *ist DS can retrospectively apply one of four filter effects to the images after recording. The filters (mono, sepia, soft-focus and slim) could all be achieved just as easily in Photoshop, but are useful on two levels. First, they do not affect the initial captured image, and second, they do not require a computer, and as the camera is PictBridge compliant, these special effect shots can also be printed without a PC.

Spec-wise the DS resembles a good mid-range SLR. It offers shutter speeds of 30-1/4000sec plus B, five main exposure modes and six scene settings, three metering modes and a wealth of exposure compensation options. There's a pop-up flash and dedicated hotshoe for more professional flash usage. There is a choice of four menus: recording, play, set-up and C (for custom). The 2in LCD allows you to zoom in pretty rapidly up to 12x on the image after recording the image.

It is a slightly scaled-down body size from that of a 35mm SLR; the camera is easy and safe to carry. There are under a dozen controls on the backplate, three on the top-plate and one elsewhere, so you are not at risk of pressing anything accidentally.

On the photographic side, the *ist DS delivered a perfect image result; a big thumbs up to the focusing system's speed and ability. Exposures appeared as expected, and it delivers electronically what you see through the optical TTL finder. As the camera performed so well in terms of its image processing it emerged on a couple of occasions I had been a little optimistic about my ability to hold the camera still or the subject to remain still. On a lesser camera, I would have got away with this – the effects would have been covered up by the inability of the camera to produce an image good enough to reveal my faults, which were were laid bare by the DS's ability to faithfully reproduce what the chip could record while the shutter was open.

The handling of colours carves a naturalistic path between over-saturation and blandness; exposures allow highlight detail to be captured better than some more-expensive DSLRs. The chip and image processing software seemed able to deal with both low and high contrast shots, with the highlight detail rarely blowing out, even in high-contrast lighting.

VERDICT

The *ist DS was launched into the sector without much fanfare, but it certainly punches above its megapixel weight and can be counted upon to deliver the goods. The images from this camera are easily better than a fair few 7MP and 8MP models. **WDC**

LEFT HAND CONTROLS
The Menu, play info and delete buttons are controlled most easily with the left thumb

OUTPUT PORTS
Beneath a flap are ports for video/USB output, DC power in and a remote control socket

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NIKON D70S

£580 Estimated Street Price

RRP £700

- **CMOS SENSOR** 6.24MP, 6.1MP effective
- **LENS** Nikon F mount, 1.5x magnification
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 30-1/8000sec
- **ISO** 200-1600
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, A, S, M, Auto, and 6 Scene
- **FLASH** Pop-up and TTL hotshoe
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** TTL optical and 2in 130,000 pixel LCD
- **OTHER** Custom functions, depth of field preview, 3 colour space, CF, PictBridge
- **POWER** Li-Ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 140 x 111 x 78mm/600g

6 mega pixels

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

top

Nikon hasn't messed with a winning formula: the layout remains unchanged since the D70

front

The camera is available in kit form with a 18-70mm f/3.5-4.5G AF-S DX lens

side

The big change here is the inclusion of a remote control socket

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

CANON EOS 350D

£530

scores

PROS: Speed, handling, overall image quality, remote control
CONS: Disappointing upgrade, occasionally weak yellow and blue reproduction, no PC socket

features	18
ease of use	18
image quality	18
design	19
value	17

TESTED JULY 2005

90%

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Nikon D70s

After the 6MP D70, Nikon aficionados get an upgrade

Among the press we've been expecting an update of the D70. It's had stiff competition from Canon, Konica Minolta, Pentax and Olympus, all of whom launched either better-specified or cheaper cameras. So what's the big deal with the D70s?

First the camera has a remote control socket for an optional electronic cable release (MC-DC1). This was added after user demand for such a device. There is also the option of wireless shooting with the ML-L3 remote release, again available separately. The camera can also be controlled via a PC using Nikon Capture 4 software, that costs extra, and the camera's USB cable.

Second, there's a new LCD monitor on the back which has been expanded to two inches with the same resolution as the original, 130,000 pixels making up the image. A final hardware addition to the D70s is a new Lithium Ion battery, EN-EL3a, offering up to 2,500 shots per charge, according to Nikon. Other advances in the electronics include improved Auto Focus and Dynamic AF and improved PictBridge page set-up support. The D70s uses a DX format 6.1-megapixel CCD, delivering 3008x 2000 images.

In exposure terms, the camera has Nikon 3D colour matrix metering using a 1005-pixel sensor to measure the scene and compare the result with a database of 30,000 pictures. A series of exposure algorithms then provides the optimum exposure for the scene, and also takes into account the colours within the scene for more accurate exposure.

Other exposure options include centreweighted metering. Spot metering is also included for critical or difficult exposure situations. Exposure modes are supported by a metering range of EV 0-20, with exposure compensation over an impressive ±5EV, in a choice of 1/3 or 1/2 stop increments. This is further supplemented with auto exposure bracketing over two or three frames covering up to ±2EV, again in 1/3 or 1/2 stop steps.

Once exposure has been determined, the White Balance is the next critical feature of a DSLR. In the case of the D70s there is a choice of auto white balance, complemented by six presets with fine tuning and manual white balance.

In handling terms, the camera fits into even a large hand comfortably, while being small, light and comfortable. There are enough buttons to access the main controls easily without being overcomplicated or button-heavy, while the flow of the menu is logical and clear. In use the camera has many unique points; at the top of the list is the fantastic 3fps continuous drive over 144 fps in Normal JPEG mode.

Quality-wise, the D70s shows good noise control through the entire dynamic range. Image sharpness is very good, even unprocessed RAW files have plenty of detail, which can be further improved on the computer, using Unsharp Mask, while the PictBridge setting turns out very good results straight to paper without a PC. The overall conclusion is slightly mixed, but the D70s certainly has more strengths than weaknesses and is capable of covering a wide range of subjects without sacrificing quality.

VERDICT

The improvements are effective for new buyers, but I wouldn't necessarily recommend upgrading from a D70, unless the remote control is an important factor for you. If upgrading from a much older DLSR, the D70s won't disappoint. The speed, features and image quality is still first rate and will probably continue to be for the near future at least. **WDC**

MONITOR
The major physical change to the camera is the upgrading of the monitor from 1.8 to 2inches. This still isn't the biggest screen around but it's certainly keeping up with the market

MENU
The D70s' menu has been tweaked to include a help screen and provide a slightly clearer interface. The help screen in particular though, could still be more comprehensive

IN ASSOCIATION WITH JESSOPS

KONICA MINOLTA DYNAX 7D

£670 Estimated Street Price

RRP £1150

- **SENSOR** 6.3MP total/6.1MP eff
- **LENS MOUNT** Minolta A-type bayonet
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 30-1/4000sec &B
- **ISO** 100-3200
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, A, S, M
- **FLASH** PC socket/ Hotshoe/ Built-in
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Optical TTL / 2.5in LCD
- **OTHER** CF, 3fps, RAW, JPEG, USB 2.0
- **POWER** Li-Ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 150 x 106 x 77.5 mm/760g

6 mega pixels

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

Konica Minolta Dynax 7D

Based on Minolta's successful Dynax 7 film camera

The price drop in technology led Konica Minolta to feel that the time was right to bring a DSLR to the masses. The Dynax 7D is bursting with features. Not least of which is a 6MP APS-sized CCD, mounted on Konica Minolta's unique anti-shake cradle. Other manufacturers use lens-based image-stabilisation systems, which move the heavier optics, and these can be a real drain on the power supply.

As an SLR it accepts interchangeable lenses, in this case, obviously Minolta fit. It works with all AF Dynax lenses, but as the sensor is smaller than a 35mm film frame, there is a magnification shift on the lenses of 1.5x, so a 50mm lens becomes, in effect, a 75mm lens. A new processor, the CxProcess III, has been added, claiming to offer more natural images and, combined with a new Advanced LSI Engine, offers fast image processing and low noise at higher sensitivity settings.

The 7D is based on Minolta's old Dynax 7 film camera, with the LCD screen on the back extended to 2.5in and turned into a colour LCD for shooting info, menu and playback. This screen is clear, sharp, bright and has auto orientation to boot. All shooting information is clearly laid out and easy to read. The LCD data can be enlarged or the screen turned off, and sensors near the viewfinder turn the LCD off when the eye is at the viewfinder, to preserve battery life.

The camera feels solid, and the top-plate mode dials are easy to grip and turn, even wearing gloves; in fact the whole camera is satisfyingly chunky and sturdy. The 7D is quite large and heavier than many of its rivals. Where confidence falters is when you view the number of buttons on the camera – there seems to be a separate control for everything. This means, though, there is less hidden in menus. There are three tabbed menus in shooting mode and once your preferences are set, you change very little other than aperture or shutter settings, white balance and occasionally metering and drive mode. Most of the external controls are within easy reach of your right hand's fingers and thumb, so with experience the operation will speed up.

Start up time is around a second. In continuous drive mode it is nippy too, with between 30 and 40 frames recording at 3fps, despite Konica Minolta's claims of 19 frames in the highest JPEG setting. Like Minolta's SLRs, the continuous AF is aided by predictive AF, which tracks a moving subject's speed and direction up to the time of capture. Once images are captured transfer is via USB 2.0 and other ports include an electronic remote socket and DC in. The card slot has a tough plastic door, and includes a sliding window for quick access to the USB port.

VERDICT

The Dynax 7D is a well-made, competent camera with some unique features. The Anti-Shake is certainly the killer application and it does the job very well. Image quality is as good as most people will need, the build quality is exemplary and probably one of the main reasons for the higher price tag. This is a fine model and should please buyers no end. **WDC**

top

With the exception of the White Balance control you could be forgiven for confusing the 7D with its film-based ancestor

front

The camera accepts interchangeable A-mount lenses including this new 17-35mm f2.8-4 D

side

The rubber port covers are secure and tough, in keeping with the general build of the camera

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

OLYMPUS E1

£650

scores

PROS: Fully featured, great build, good images, nice LCD, Anti-Shake
CONS: Too many buttons, harsh noise reduction, noisy AF system and lenses

TESTED FEBRUARY 2005

features	18
ease of use	17
image quality	17
design	19
value	17

88%

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FLASH COMPENSATION
The large dial is for exposure compensation, with a secondary sub dial for the useful flash compensation dial

ANTI-SHAKE
This allows you to shoot up to 3 stops slower handheld, by moving the CCD to compensate for camera shake

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FUJIFILM FINEPIX S3 PRO

£1200 Estimated Street Price

RRP £1600

- **SENSOR** 6.17million S/ 6.17million R pixels 12MP output
- **LENS MOUNT** Nikon F
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 30-1/4000sec &B
- **ISO** 100-1600
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, A, S, M
- **FLASH** PC socket, Hotshoe, Built-in
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** OPT TTL / 2in TFT monitor
- **OTHER** CF, xD, 2.5fps, RAW, JPEG, USB2.0, IEEE 1394
- **POWER** 4x AA type Ni-MH batteries, AC adaptor optional
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 47.8x 135.3x 78.5mm/815g

top

The mode dial is on the left and the shutter release on the right, as well as a grey LCD data panel

front

As well as a built-in flash there's a PC socket for studio flash and an AF illuminator for low light

side

Ports for USB 2.0, firewire and video out, AC-in and an eletronic remote

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

CANON EOS 20D

£900

scores

PROS: Image quality, sensor, ease of use

CONS: Spec falls short of what is expected at the price, software clunky, slow drive, small buffer

features	17
ease of use	17
image quality	18
design	17
value	16

TESTED MARCH 2005

85%

see more on the web

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6 x2 mega pixels

Fujifilm Finepix S3 Pro

The SR sensor extends the dynamic range of the S3 Pro

Fujifilm's third incarnation of its S-series DSLR, long a favourite of both enthusiasts and much of the pro market, is the S3 Pro.

It uses Fujifilm's Super CCD, promising an output size to 12MP, and uses the SR version of the sensor. The Super CCD SR has 12 million effective pixels, when the S and R pixels are combined; each of these is paired to produce a single output pixel, resulting in higher dynamic range. Files can also be interpolated to 12MP output. Its APS-C sized sensor is the largest in the range. The S3 has a built-in flash unit and a hotshoe, which accepts Nikon-dedicated flash units, as well as a PC socket for attaching X-sync external guns.

Main exposure modes are manual, program, shutter priority and aperture priority, changed by a control dial on the left. The right side has the shutter release button, encircled by the power switch. Usefully, the shutter release has a standard threaded cable release, with a port on the left side of the camera for an electronic remote. There is a pair of EV compensation buttons, for exposure and flash compensation.

The main LCD is a 2in version with 235,000 pixels. Its menu is divided into five short sub-menus, and allows camera set up as well as offering a choice of colour spaces, either Adobe RGB or sRGB, custom White Balance, and either standard or wide dynamic range can also be set. Live preview enables viewing of the subject on the LCD instead of through the viewfinder, just like on compacts. There's both an xD and a CF card slot and images can be recorded to either, by selecting an option in the main menu. The camera doesn't allow copying from one card to another, but that's a minor issue. Power-wise the camera is compatible with AA NiMH cells, and on the software front, the S3 Pro comes equipped with Hyperutility 2 software, which offers a raft of features including image browsing, RAW conversion and tethered shooting.

Images have a nice tonality, with a good range of tones from shadow to highlight. Unprocessed, the pictures can appear a little flat and need a lift in contrast to get the best from them. Similarly the sharpness of images looks a little low at default settings but is improved by unsharp mask. In PictBridge mode and using the film settings (from JPEGs), sharpness is automatically enhanced and produces better results than expected.

Noise is well handled – the new processor is said to reduce the signal-to-noise ratio at higher ISOs. It does, but the maximum sensitivity is limited to ISO 1600, when competitors are offering 3200. The dynamic range and the tonality of the prints is exceptional.

Within the RAW software are options to really improve the images. The most useful is a slider to control the dynamic range, moving from 0 to 400%. This seems to control the amount of blending between the S and R sensors, and does save highlight detail in most cases.

VERDICT

The S3 Pro is a mixed bag. It's expensive but offers a higher resolution than its nearest rivals. The new sensor can produce outstanding images. However, the S3's specifications often fail to match those of cheaper rivals. The camera is good but it could have been great. **WDC**

DUAL LCD SCREENS
The top screen offers access to image size and quality, with parameters to set the dynamic range, output size, colour options and more. The lower screen displays a standard menu and shows image preview. It also displays the unique live image preview

CONTROL DIAL
Camera functions such as aperture and shutter are controlled by a pair of dials (another is at the front). These are also used to change other settings, in conjunction with the various function buttons

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EPSON R-D1

£2000 Estimated Street Price

RRP £2000

- **CCD** 6MP effective
- **LENS** Interchangeable EM mount
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 1-1/2000sec & B
- **ISO** 200-1600
- **EXPOSURE MODES** Manual, Aperture Priority AE
- **FLASH** Hotshoe/ PC (X-sync)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Real-size opt/ 2.0in LCD
- **OTHER** SD, optical rangefinder, JPEG, RAW
- **POWER** Li-Ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 88.5 x 142 x 39.5mm/590g

6 mega pixels

WDC DIGITAL CAMERA choice

top

From the top the camera resembles a good old-fashioned rangefinder, with the exception of the radical new dial system

front

Except for the front there is absolutely no clue to the camera's digital status

side

On the right is a door covering the SD card slot. Otherwise the camera has no ports... for anything

up against

THIS IS A UNIQUE CAMERA

scores

PROS: Classic design translates well to digital, fun, build, innovative features, RAW plug-in features

CONS: Vignetting problems, needs some knowledge, no PC connection

TESTED FEBRUARY 2005

features	16
ease of use	16
image quality	17
design	20
value	16

85%

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Epson R-D1

A digital rangefinder that takes interchangeable lenses

The Epson R-D1 is the world's first true digital rangefinder that takes interchangeable lenses. It comes from a seemingly odd collaboration between Epson and Cosina, who make a wide range of budget lenses, and a few years ago licensed and resurrected the respected Voigtländer marque.

The R-D1 is essentially a Voigtländer Bessa body, that accepts M-fit lenses and Leica screw lenses via an adapter. Demand for the R-D1 has been huge. Leica has announced that it won't have a digital version of its M series camera until 2006. Thanks to Epson, the thousands of rangefinder users can go digital today. At the camera's heart is a 6MP APS-sized sensor. This is the same size as we see in many of the current DSLRs, meaning that lenses have a 1.5x magnification shift.

Focusing is manual, using the optical viewfinder. This is a traditional coupled rangefinder system using a 1.0x viewfinder. Users of older cameras may not recognise the viewfinder's data display. Shutter speeds are shown at the bottom of the viewfinder. There is a choice of manual or aperture priority modes, but no shutter priority or program. The R-D1 has a digital sensor so it still needs an accurate metering system. Centreweighted is the only metering choice. The control dial on the top-plate is a new feature showing four vital pieces of information in an unusual but effective way. The outer dial and main 'hour hand' indicates the amount of frames left on the SD card. A needle on a corona on the left of the dial indicates white balance. On the back of the camera is a small switch to change white balance and image quality settings in conjunction with another unusual widget. The left of the camera has what looks like a rewind knob from a pre-M4 Leica. This is in fact the menu navigation and control dial for the White Balance and Quality settings. A film wind-on lever on the right side of the top-plate cocks the shutter, which is a vertically travelling focal-plane shutter just like traditional rangefinders. Start-up is pretty instant, and the Li-Ion battery seems reasonably powerful, recharged once after two days' heavy shooting. The R-D1 has no connection ports at all, other than for flash. Images must be downloaded via a card reader and the battery charged in a separate charger.

It turns out good exposures, which can be helped by a basic knowledge of using EV compensation for dark or light subjects. Sharpness was extremely good and JPEG images are well processed. RAW images are a little different. Rangefinder lenses are more prone to vignetting due to the shorter lens grouping and symmetrical construction, and the RAW files really indicate this. However, the Epson Raw plug-in lets you set the lens used, and the phenomenon disappears. Colour is rich and vibrant, and noise minimal, though I'd avoid shooting at ISO 1600.

VERDICT

A quirky camera requiring fairly solid photographic knowledge, but it is great fun. There are certain vignetting problems which require time to fix. If you are a Leica, Contax, Nikon or Voigtländer rangefinder buff, the R-D1 is sure to appeal. WDC

VIEWFINDER
This is a real-image viewfinder with bright lines indicating the field of view according to the lens used (of a choice of 3). The viewfinder is bright enough but not as bright as a Leica's

WHITE BALANCE/ QUALITY
A two-point switch allows you to make changes to white balance and imgae quality/size. Just point the indicator to the desired function and turn the milled dial on the far left

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CANON EOS 5D

£2100 Estimated Street Price

RRP £2500

- **SENSOR** 13.3/12.8MP effective
- **LENS** Interchangeable Canon EF
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 30-1/8000sec & B
- **ISO** 100-1600
- **EXP MODES** P, A, S, M
- **FLASH** PC socket, hotshoe
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Opt/2.5in LCD
- **OTHER** CF I/II, USB 2.0, sRGB and Adobe colour space, PictureStyle
- **POWER** Lithium-ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 152 x 113 x 75mm/810g

13 mega pixels

top

The top of the camera is strikingly similar to the 20D. The LCD displays info about the camera settings

front

The mount is compatible with Canon EF-lenses with no multiplication factor. EF-S lenses cannot be used

side

The 5D is constructed from Magnesium alloy and plastic. The CompactFlash or Microdrive fit under a door on the side

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

NIKON D2X

£2900

scores

PROS: Well built, good features, speed of use, images

CONS: Some fiddly controls, very faint edge fringing

TESTED DECEMBER 2005

features	19
ease of use	18
image quality	19
design	17
value	18

91%

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WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

Canon EOS 5D

Bring out your old film wideangle lenses

The EOS 5D has 13million pixels spread out in a lovely rectangular grid in a full-frame sensor. Full frame is an imaging area the same size as a frame of 35mm film, or 24x36mm. Other cameras with this sized sensor have been aimed at the professional, or very rich enthusiast. The EOS 5D differs because Canon is aiming it at the enthusiast – although the fairly well-heeled one.

The sensor is a CMOS type, larger than is usually found in the majority of DSLRs, so the size, or pixel pitch, of the individual sensor is larger. This means it should display less noise and have a greater dynamic range than DSLRs using the APS-C sized chip.

Canon has developed a new system of image processing, essentially an advanced form of scene modes. Picture Style lets you set processing profiles in the camera. Three custom options are available, to which you can add your own parameters or download custom versions from Canon's website. The good thing is that it can work with RAW images. The 5D still has a standard approach to ICC profiles.

The camera includes a noise-reduction system, primarily for longer exposures. It seems to make the camera add a blur over the image to hide the noise rather than remove it, so images look less sharp. There are a number of options for White Balance, as well as a set of presets and auto WB, all of which are pretty darned good. The 5D boasts several options that push it into the semi-pro or even professional bracket. It has no built-in flash, so a Canon-compatible flash needs to be added to your shopping list, but there's a PC sync socket for external flash, so it can easily be used in the studio. The 5D offers a respectable 3fps over 60 frames in JPEG mode. The initial RAW file is between 10 and 14MB, while a compressed JPEG is around 5MB. The processing power and memory buffer size needed to process three of those a second 60 times, without a break, is quite impressive.

The magnesium alloy body may not be up to the rigours of the Iraqi desert, but is tough enough to take the knocks of everyday life. It has a comforting weight, heavier than the 20D, but comes in at less than a kilo (without lens). The grip feels secure, and the buttons and controls on the camera are far from flimsy to the touch. The camera controls are closer to that of the 20D, better serving the needs of the advanced enthusiast, or semi-pro, making it an attractive choice to those who wish to upgrade from a 20D or 10D. The camera will feel natural and intuitive.

An issue is Canon's insistence on putting the depth-of-field preview in the wrong place – placed for the left hand. This is the wrong position for the left hand to reach it, especially when using a long telephoto lens. The Exposure Compensation system is also not immediately obvious. You will get used to it, but I defy a new or occasional user to find or remember it.

The problem with full-frame cameras is that you're more likely to use older lenses, and unless you've spent on quality optics in the first place, image quality will suffer in comparison to film, especially at the edges. Newer lenses are better, though. There is minor purple fringing and some loss of definition, but results tended to be first rate – especially RAW images. JPEGs will always show some slight image degradation. There's noise from ISO 800 on, but it's extremely well controlled.

VERDICT

A superb camera, with only minor niggles, mainly ones that can be levelled at any Canon camera. In terms of performance and image quality, there's not much this camera can't do and it should win many fans. **WDC**

LCD MONITOR
The 2.5inch LCD is the largest yet on a Canon camera, showing plenty of image detail, especially when used with the magnify tool for sharpness checks. The menu is colour coded and follows previous Canon designs.
It's in here you'll find the new Picture Style function

SCROLL WHEEL
Instead of a button cluster, the Canon uses a scroll wheel to navigate the menus and pictures (in review mode).
When the power button is switched to the dial indicator, the EV compensation is activated

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NIKON D2Hs

£2200 Estimated Street Price

RRP £2500

- **SENSOR** 4MP effective JFET
- **LENS** Nikon fit
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 30-1/8000sec & B
- **ISO** 200-1600
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, A, S, M, ±5EV
- **FLASH** Hotshoe
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Opt / 2.5in LCD
- **OTHER** CF, 9fps, RAW, TIFF, JPEG, USB 2.0
- **POWER** Li-Ion
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 158 x 150 x 86 mm/1150g

4 mega pixels

top

The Nikon D2Hs is a big beast but handles well, with good balance and well-placed controls

front

The bottom right of the grip has a pair of auxiliary control wheels and shutter release button

side

Connections include USB 2.0, remote control and GPS!

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

CANON 1D MK II

£3080

scores

PROS: Good handling, image quality and system support, speed

CONS: 4MP may not be enough

features	19
ease of use	18
image quality	17
design	19
value	18

TESTED OCTOBER 2005

91%

see more on the web

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Nikon D2HS

If you want speed, you won't do better than the D2Hs

The D2Hs is no ordinary 4MP camera. Nikon makes two versions of its top-end camera, the D2X and D2Hs, the latter of which has replaced the D2H. Both are aimed at pros, but within different markets. The D2Hs is about speed: of shooting and of transfer.

But what can 4MP offer? It's good enough for newsprint, and this camera is aimed at news and sports photographers. They could use the optional Wi-Fi adapter and have their photos at a news desk in seconds. It boasts up to 9fps in high-speed mode, or customised settings of 1-7fps in low-speed mode. The camera buffer can hold up to 50 JPEGs, enough to maintain a fairly constant burst. The camera has a single card slot, accepting CF cards and Microdrive. As well as JPEG, other formats are supported including Nikon Electronic Files (NEF), Nikon's raw format. The camera gives you the option of shooting in TIFF, as well as a choice of RAW + JPEG options.

The camera works best with CPU-type lenses, ideally type G or D to maintain full functionality. It has the new 3D Colour Matrix II which uses a 1005-pixel RGB sensor and sets the exposure on a variety of information across the entire frame. Among the information analysed is colour and distance.

A fast camera needs a fast and accurate AF system. The D2Hs uses Nikon's Multi-Cam2000 module, with single-area AF, dynamic AF, group dynamic AF and dynamic area AF, with closest subject focusing. The white balance uses the 1005-pixel metering sensor in auto mode, along with 5 preset manual modes with fine tuning, and a manual mode. Further image control is set by a range of sharpening, contrast and colour modes, including two sRGB options and Adobe RGB.

This is a camera built to last – it can withstand temperatures of 0-40°C. While a heavy camera, it's well balanced even with big lenses, and holds very well. For portrait-format shooting, there's a secondary shutter release button bottom right, accompanied by front and rear command dials to rapidly change camera settings while you shoot. The viewfinder is bright and clear with comprehensive information. The back plate has the 2.5in LCD, with menu access and image playback. The menu is complicated on initial set-up, with a plethora of options, but this is generally expected on pro model DSLRs.

The dynamic range of the pictures is very good indeed, with good shadow and highlight detail maintained. Very contrasty images cause problems, with highlights blowing, but that's to be expected. Colour too is excellent, with the benefits of the 3D colour matrix metering showing through. In terms of sharpness the camera performs admirably. Noise is good too: the large pixel pitch seems to be a benefit, with even the higher ISO images remarkably noise free. The Noise Reduction option works well at ISO 1600.

VERDICT

The D2Hs is fast, fun and furious, backed by a complete professional system. As good as the camera is, it is still only 4MP. If you're a Nikon user and need a fast, reliable camera, the D2Hs may be right up your street. WDC

VIEWFINDER
The viewfinder is bright and large, with plenty of information on display. The high viewpoint makes it easy for spectacles wearers to see the whole finder

SECONDARY LCD
This is used to access oft-changed functions such as ISO, WB, and image quality

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NIKON D2X

£2900 Estimated Street Price

RRP £3500

- **CCD** 12MP effective
- **LENS** Interchangeable Nikon AF mount
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 30-1/8000sec & B
- **ISO** 100-800
- **EXPOSURE MODES** P, A, S, M, ±5EV
- **FLASH** Hotshoe/ PC (X sync)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Optical/2.5in LCD
- **OTHER** CFI/II, RAW, TIFF, JPEG, 5fps over 21 frames in JPEG mode
- **POWER** Li-Ion EN-EL4
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 157.5 x 149.5 x 85.5mm /1070g

12 mega pixels

top

The top-plate is the point of contact for most of the photographic controls, which can all be checked on the LCD

front

The camera accepts all Nikon lenses with varying degrees of functionality depending on type and age

side

The left side contains the ports, including USB 2.0, protected by rubber covers

up against

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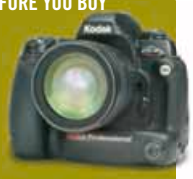
CANON EOS 1D MKII

£3080



scores

PROS: Great design, image quality, speed, features
CONS: Single card slot, occasional faint fringing, bundled software

features	19
ease of use	18
image quality	19
design	20
value	19

TESTED MAY 2005

95%

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Nikon D2X

Nikon's new 12-megapixel D2X, the successor to the D1X

The DSLR arena is as competitive as any football competition, with Manchester United and Chelsea represented by Nikon and Canon. So what chance does Nikon have against the mighty EOS? They are vastly different cameras, and each should be judged on its own merits. The D2X has had a massive makeover since its predecessor, the D1X.

The first big change is the sensor, with a hike in pixels from 5.9 to 12.4 million effective pixels, but still in the Nikon DX format of 23.7x15.7mm. Nikon claims the CMOS sensor combined with a new processor and large buffer offers a faster workflow, with a frame rate of 5fps over 21 frames in JPEG mode or 15 images in RAW format. The upgrade to the image processor has improved colour control and extended Adobe RGB capability in all three colour modes. The 3D colour matrix metering has been given a revamp, with a 1005-pixel RGB sensor which can measure not just exposure, but colour and white balance. The D2X is one of the few digital cameras to offer multiple exposures, up to 10, then merge the shots into one file without destroying the original files.

Auto rotation has been added, so images automatically orient in the LCD and on the PC, and the popular WiFi capabilities of the D2H are migrated over to the D2X. Exposure control covers the usual manual, shutter priority, aperture priority AE and program mode. One of the camera's bonuses is the inclusion of the Nikon Multi-CAM 2000 AF module. The D2X has a full complement of flash modes. Images are recorded to Compact Flash Type I and II.

The D2X is a chunky monkey, with a build quality to match its price. The contours of the grip fit nicely into the hand and the rubber coating provides a non-slip security. Shooting in portrait format with the secondary shutter release button is also very comfortable. The controls can seem intimidating at first, as there's a wide array of buttons, and Nikon doesn't provide a standard mode dial; instead you need to press the mode button and use the rear control dial to change modes. The speed of operation is the big selling point, though – 5fps over 21 frames at the largest JPEG setting is stunning for a 12MP model.

Initial views of the images from the D2X are very favourable. The exposures are spot on, even in demanding conditions, and the AF hits the mark each time. The dynamic range of the camera seems particularly wide, with excellent shadow and highlight detail. Auto white balance covers almost all eventualities satisfactorily. At the default settings the camera does a good job, and if you shoot Raw that's all you'll need. If speed and output is important, then JPEG is the best choice. In terms of digital quality, the camera again scores highly – there is very little noise in the images even at the higher ends of the sensitivity spectrum.

VERDICT

There's a lot to love about the D2X and little to criticise. There's a tiny amount of occasional fringing but the camera has controls to fix this. Handling is superb and the sheer amount of features and control offered is hard to match at this price bracket. **WDC**

LCD SCREEN/MENU
At 2.5inches, the LCD is large and detailed but is difficult to see in very bright light. The menus are comprehensive and relatively easy to navigate

SECONDARY LCD
The grey LCD and acccompanying buttons control camera settings such as white balance, ISO, and image quality

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CANON EOS 1DS MKII

£5600 Estimated Street Price

RRP £6000

16 mega pixels

- **CMOS** 16.7MP effective Full frame
- **LENS** Interchangeable EF mount
- **SHUTTER SPEED** 30-1/8000sec & B
- **ISO** 100-1600 (expandable to 50 and 3200)
- **EXPOSURE MODES** M, A, S, P
- **FLASH** Hotshoe/ PC (X-sync)
- **VIEWFINDER/MONITOR** Real-size optical/ 2in LCD
- **OTHER** SD, CF I&II, JPEG, RAW, JPEG+RAW
- **POWER** NiMH pack
- **DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT** 156 x 158 x 80 mm/1215g

top

The camera doesn't look too different from the previous 1Ds, with clearly labelled and easy-to-use buttons

front

The 1Ds Mk II accepts EF mount lenses (not EF-S) and has a 35mm-sized CMOS sensor

side

Rubber covers protect the ports, and the large Lithium-Ion battery slides into the underside grip

up against

CHECK OUT THIS SIMILAR CAMERA IN OUR PRICE COMPARISON BEFORE YOU BUY

KODAK PRO SLR/C

Discontinued

scores

PROS: Superb image quality, camera body design

CONS: None really, but a larger LCD would be nice

features	19
ease of use	19
image quality	20
design	20
value	18

TESTED APRIL 2005

96%

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Canon EOS 1DS MKII

WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA choice

A top-end Digital SLR successor to the impressive Mark 1

The most obvious difference with the new flagship MkII camera is the 16.7-Megapixel full-frame CMOS sensor with a built-in low pass filter. The DIGIC II processor provides improved image quality and a faster startup time of 0.3 seconds. The image quality is quite remarkable, provided that you use the best-quality lenses, and the images are the smoothest and sharpest yet seen from any digital SLR.

There's a huge instruction manual, but the quick-start guide will get you shooting straight away. You can for example, extend the ISO range from 50–3200, while in JPEG capture mode there are four choices of pixel capture size, from 4992 x 3328 pixels, down to 2496 x 1664 pixels, with a choice of 10 user-configurable JPEG compression settings, a choice of Adobe RGB and sRGB colour spaces and a five-level contrast tone and saturation controls.

The weather-resistant magnesium body is rugged as ever and has several nice design improvements. The 2in LCD has 230,000 pixels, almost twice that of the MkI. There is a x10 playback zoom button and image scroll controls as well as an image-orientation sensor. The new MkII battery promises a battery life up to 1200 shots at 20°C. The shutter system is durable with a projected life of 200,000 cycles, offering speeds of 30 to 1/8000 sec.

The 45-point autofocus system includes a very accurate predictive servo focusing system, and the EF lens mount gives you access to nearly all the lenses in the Canon system spanning from 14mm to 1200mm. And as the sensor is full frame, the lenses' focal lengths are as stated.

The Evaluative Through-The-Lens auto-flash system gives it a distance-linked precision flash system that is accurate and reliable. The E-TTL II is able to achieve the correct exposure, particularly with bright or reflective objects.

There is no support for the Adobe DNG file format. But it would be unfair to draw any negative conclusions at this stage, as the Canon EOS 1Ds Mk II was announced at the same time as the launch of DNG. The Mk II ships with an updated version of the Digital Photo Professional software – processing the CR2 (Camera Raw 2) raw file six times faster than the basic EOS Camera utility. However, it is still slower compared to opening the same raw files in Photoshop CS or Phase One's Capture One program. Digital Photo Professional will at the very least provide purchasers of the camera with software that can manage and edit raw capture files at a basic level. But it is still no match for the sophistication of Phase One's Capture One or the Adobe Photoshop Camera Raw plug-in that ships with Photoshop CS.

VERDICT

Th EOS MkII offers the best image quality compared to any other digital SLR and has the most pixels. It represents excellent value for money, but only if you are selling lots of pictures on a weekly basis. As far as professional users will be concerned, this is definitely the camera that all others shall be judged against. **WDC**

LCD SCREEN
Canon has increased the screen resolution of the 2in LCD, now with 230,000 pixels. The menu follows Canon's five-screen format

MEDIA CARD COVER
A locking door protects the dual-slot media card compartment. The 1Ds MkII accepts CF I&II, including FAT 32 High-capacity cards and allows simultaneous recording to Secure Digital media

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Mamiya

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Mamiya DIGITAL

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Prego dp 6000	£199.99
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Prego dk 4010	£249.99

NEW 5324, 5200 & 6500 See website

Samsung

L50 new	£159.00
L55W new	£199.00
PRO 815 new	£479.00
DigiMax A402	£79.00
DigiMax A400	£109.00
DigiMax i5	£189.00
DigiMax V700	£189.00

Sony

Cybershot DSC-P200	£235.00
Cybershot DSC-S40	£129.00
Cybershot DSC-S80	£145.00
Cybershot DSC-S90S	£169.00
Cybershot DSC-T5	£239.00
Cybershot DSC-T33	£249.00
Cybershot DSC-T7 new	£275.00
Cybershot DSC-W5 new	£199.00
Cybershot DSC-W7	£235.00
Cybershot DSC-W15 new	£210.00
Cybershot DSC-W17	£249.00
Cybershot DSC-H1 new	£289.00
Cybershot DSC-M2 new	£339.00
Cybershot DSC-N1 new	£316.00

NEW DSC-R1 10 Megapixels | DSC-N1 8 Megapixels See website

Fujifilm FinePix S5600 Zoom

5 mega pixels — 10x Optical Zoom — 38-380mm Zoom

FUJIFILM £259 or £11/mth

Fujifilm FinePix S9500 Zoom

FREE Fuji multi-function case worth £29.99

9 mega pixels — 10.7x Optical Zoom — 28-300mm Zoom

FUJIFILM £479 or £20/mth

NEW Leica D-LUX 2

8 mega pixels — 4x Zoom — 18-112mm — 3 Image ratios

Leica Crumpler Case ...£28

Digiscoping Adapter..£138

£548 or £23/mth

Olympus µ[mju] 600 Digital

5 mega pixels — 3x Optical Zoom — 35-105mm Zoom

OLYMPUS £189 or £8/mth

Olympus µ[mju] 800 Digital

8 mega pixels — 3x Optical Zoom — 35-114mm Zoom

OLYMPUS £269 or £12/mth

Kodak Easyshare Z740

5 mega pixels — 10x Optical Zoom — 38-380mm Zoom

Kodak £199 or £9/mth

Konica Minolta Dimage X1

8 mega pixels — 3x Optical Zoom — 37-111mm Zoom

KONICA MINOLTA £215 or £9/mth

Konica Minolta Dimage X60

5 mega pixels — 3x Optical Zoom — 38-114mm Zoom

KONICA MINOLTA £189 or £8/mth

Sony Cybershot DSC-T7

5 mega pixels — 3x Optical Zoom — 38-114mm Zoom

SONY £275 or £11/mth

Pentax Optio S60

6 mega pixels — 3x Optical Zoom — 35-107mm Zoom

PENTAX £169 or £8/mth

Sony Cybershot DSC-H1

5 mega pixels — 12x Optical Zoom — 36-432mm Zoom

BEST BUY

SONY £289 or £13/mth

Rollei Prego dp 8300

8 mega pixels — 3x Optical Zoom — 36-108mm Zoom

Rollei £249.99 or £11/mth

Casio EXILIM EX-Z750

7 mega pixels — 4x Optical Zoom — 38-114mm Zoom

CASIO £269 or £12/mth

Ricoh Caplio R3

5 mega pixels — 7.1x Optical Zoom — 28-200mm Zoom

RICOH £219 or £10/mth

Ricoh Caplio GR Digital

8 mega pixels — x Optical Zoom — mm Zoom

RICOH £379 or £10/mth

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Canon

NEW EOS 5D

SLR 12.8 mega pixels

See the Andy Rouse EOS 5D Review on our website

- 12.8 MP full frame CMOS sensor
- 3 fps 60 JPEG image burst
- 9-point AF with 6 Assist AF points
- 2.5" LCD
- Picture Style image processing
- DIGIC II
- Records RAW/ JPEG files

SEE WEBSITE FOR LATEST PRICES

EOS 5D - Body only **£1999** or £34/mth

EOS 5D Plus... Canon EF 24-105 f/4L IS USM **£2649** or £111/mth

5D - Accessories
BG-E4 grip £169.99

NEW EOS 1D MkIIN

SLR 8.2 mega pixels

SEE WEBSITE FOR LATEST PRICES

- 8.2 MP CMOS sensor
- 8.5 fps/48 JPEG image burst
- 45-point AF
- Bright 2.5" 230K pixel LCD
- Picture Style image processing
- DIGIC II
- Wide ISO range from L:50 to H:3200

WFT-E1 Wireless Transmitter £699

EOS 1D MkIIN - Body only **£2799** or £117/mth

NEW EOS 1Ds MkII

SLR 16.7 mega pixels

Andy Rouse Review See website

- 16.7 MP full frame 36 x 24mm CMOS sensor
- 0.3 second start up and 4fps performance
- ISO 100-1600, expandable to L:50 and H:3200
- 2.0" LCD screen with 230,000 pixels,
- 1.5-10x playback zoom

NEW 430 EX Speedlite £189

EOS 1Ds MkII - Body only **£4699** £196/mth

EOS 1Ds Mk II Plus... EF 16-35mm f2.8 L USM **£5698** or £240/mth

EF 17-40mm f4 L USM **£5243** or £220/mth

EF 24-70mm f2.8 L USM **£5598** or £235/mth

NEW Canon EOS 350D

Switch to the future with the EOS 350D Digital
and take your creativity to a new dimension. Compact, lightweight and intuitive; delivering results to captivate the most discerning audience.

8.2 mega pixels SLR

Editors' Choice Gold Award TIPA 2005

- Worlds lightest digital SLR body
- High-performance 8.0-megapixel CMOS sensor
- Sophisticated DIGIC II imaging engine
- 3 frames per second (fps) for up to 14 shots

EOS 350D - Body only **£529** or £23/mth

EOS 350D Plus... EF-S 18-55mm **£599** or £25/mth

EF-S 18-55mm + EF 55-200mm + BG-E3 Grip **£799** or £34/mth

EF-S 17-85mm + BG-E3 Grip **£979** or £41/mth

NEW Canon EOS 20D

Balance, Poise, Precision
The EOS 20D is the semi-professional digital SLR to deliver all the speed, precision and flexibility synonymous with high-end film SLR cameras - plus a whole lot more.

8.2 mega pixels SLR

£100 CASH BACK see website for details

£799 with cash back

Andy Rouse Review See website

Digital Photo Gold Award

- 8.2 Megapixel CMOS sensor
- 5 fps with up to 23 frame burst
- 9-point AF
- DIGIC II Processor
- E-TTL II distance-linked flash

EOS 20D - Body only **£899** or £38/mth

EOS 20D Plus... Canon EF-S 18-55mm f3.5-5.6 DC **£969** or £41/mth

Canon EF-S 17-85mm f4-5.6 IS USM **£1269** or £54/mth

Canon Lenses

EF20mm f2.8 USM	£329.00	EF20-35mm f/3.5-4.5 USM	£284.00
EF24mm f2.8	£309.00	EF24-85mm f/3.5-4.5 USM	£244.00
EF28mm f1.8 USM	£319.00	EF24-70 F2.8L USM	£899.00
EF28mm f2.8	£137.00	EF24-105 F4 L IS USM	£695.00
EF50mm f1.4 USM	£244.00	EF28-105mm f/4-5.6 USM	£147.00
EF60mm f2.8 Macro	£282.00	EF28-135mm f/3.5-5.6 IS USM	£335.00
EF85mm f1.8 USM	£269.00	EF70-200mm f/2.8 L IS USM	£1299.00
EF300mm f4.0 L IS USM	£924.00	EF70-200mm f/4.0 L USM	£479.00
EF-S10-22mm f3.5-4.5 USM (for EOS 20D & 350D only)	£524.00	EF70-300mm f/4.0-5.6 IS USM NEW	£369.00
EF16-35mm f/2.8 L USM	£999.00	EF75-300mm f/4.0-5.6 USM	£159.00
EF17-40mm f/4.0 L USM	£544.00	EF100-400mm f/4.5-5.6 L IS USM	£1099.00
EF-S17-85mm f4-5.6 USM (for EOS 20D & 350D only)	£427.00		

Canon — NEW MODELS - See website for more

IXUS i Zoom
5 mega pixels — 2.4x Optical Zoom, 30-90mm Zoom

Canon £229 or £10/mth

IXUS 55
5 mega pixels — 3x Optical Zoom, 35-105mm Zoom

Canon £249 or £11/mth

IXUS 750
7 mega pixels — 3x Optical Zoom, 37-111mm Zoom

Canon £329 or £14/mth

PowerShot A410
3 mega pixels — 3.2x Optical Zoom, 41-131mm Zoom

Canon £109 or £8/mth

PowerShot A610
5 mega pixels — 4x Optical Zoom, 35-140mm Zoom

Canon £209 or £9/mth

PowerShot A620
7 mega pixels — 4x Optical Zoom, 35-140mm Zoom

Canon £239 or £10/mth

PowerShot S2 IS
5 mega pixels — 12x Optical Zoom, 36-432mm Zoom

Canon £339 or £15/mth

PowerShot S80
8 mega pixels — 3.6x Optical Zoom, 28-100mm Zoom

Canon £379 or £16/mth

PowerShot G6
7.1 mega pixels — 4x Optical Zoom, 35-140mm Zoom

Canon £389 or £17/mth

PowerShot PRO 1
8 mega pixels — 7x Optical Zoom, 28-200mm Zoom

Canon £429 or £18/mth

PowerShot S70
4 mega pixels — 3.6x Optical Zoom, 28-100mm Zoom

Canon £279 or £12/mth

IXUS 40
7 mega pixels — 3x Optical Zoom, 35-105mm Zoom

Canon £189 or £8/mth

DIGITAL IXUS WIRELESS new	£See web	PowerShot A410 new	£109.00	PowerShot S70	£279.00
IXUS i Zoom new	£229.00	PowerShot A510	£149.00	PowerShot S2 IS	£339.00
IXUS 40	£184.00	PowerShot A520	£169.00	PowerShot S80 new	£379.00
IXUS 55 new	£249.00	PowerShot A610 new	£209.00	PowerShot G6	£389.00
IXUS 750 new	£329.00	PowerShot A620 new	£239.00	PowerShot PRO 1	£429.00

Nikon

NEW Nikon D200

Nikon launches its powerful, feature-packed D200 digital SLR camera, delivering a high-precision, high-performance package and creating a new class of camera between entry-level and professional digital SLRs.

10.2 million pixels SLR

Plus 1/2 price lens deal...see website

D200 - Body only **£1199** or £18/mth

See website for latest prices and bundle offers

NEW Nikon D50

SAVE OVER £400 ON D50 & D70s ACCESSORIES see website for details

Vivid colour and sharp details straight from the camera
Specifically designed for consumers looking to upgrade from a digital compact to the next level of digital photography, the D50 is affordable and simple to use; perfect for the SLR beginner.

6.1 mega pixels SLR

- 6.1 effective megapixel Nikon DX Format CCD
- 3D Colour Matrix Metering II ensures accurate exposure control and white balance
- Near-instant 0.2-second power-up, and quick shutter response

Battery Grips Hahnel HN-D50 £99.99

NEW LOWER PRICE

Available in... Black, Silver

£399

D50 - Accessories CF-D50 Semi Soft Case £34.99

Photographer July 2005 88%
- Great AF and metering
- Good flash
- Faithful RGB
- Really easy to use
- Big and clear LCD

D50 - Body only **£399** or £17/mth

D50 Plus...
AF-S DX 18-55mm f3.5-5.6 G ED **£479** or £20/mth
AF-S 24-85mm f3.5-5.6G **£549** or £23/mth
AF-S DX 18-70mm f3.5-4.5G IF ED **£585** or £25/mth
AF-S DX 18-55mm & AF-S DX55-200mm **£639** or £27/mth

NEW Nikon D70s

SAVE OVER £400 ON D50 & D70s ACCESSORIES see website for details

An evolution of the award winning D70
The D70s is ready to shoot in an instant, taking just 0.2 seconds to power up. Shutter release time lag is minimised for quick response which makes shooting even more efficient and enjoyable.

Remote Control Shutter Release Cord MC-DC1 £29.99

6.1 mega pixels SLR

- 6.1 effective megapixel Nikon DX Format CCD
- 3 frames per second for a continuous burst of up to 144 pictures
- 0.2 sec. power-up and short shutter release time lag
- Large 2.0" LCD monitor with intuitive menus and help display

Battery Grips Hahnel HN-D70 ..£99.99

D70s - Accessories
CF-D70s Semi Soft Case £34.99
EN-EL3 Lith-ion Battery £49.99

D70s - Body only **£579** or £25/mth

D70s Plus... Nikkor AF-S DX 18-70mm f3.5-4.5 G SG IF ED **£749** or £32/mth

Scoop Purchase

Nikon D100

LAST FEW

£699

Nikon D2Hs

4.1 mega pixels SLR

- LBCAST image sensor with 4.1 effective megapixels
- Advanced new image processing engine
- 8 fps for up to 50 consecutive shots
- 3D-Color Matrix Metering II

D2Hs - Body only **£2049** or £86/mth

NEW Nikon D2X

Kirk L-Bracket for D2H & D2X fitted with wireless **£149.95**

12.1 mega pixels SLR

- 12.4 effective megapixels
- Continuous shooting at 5 fps 8fps shooting at 6.8 megapixels
- Faster read/write speed for the memory card
- Advanced 3D-Color Matrix Metering II

D2X - Body only **£2849** or £119/mth

Nikkor Lenses

DX Fisheye 10.5mm f2.8 ED	£489.00	180mm f2.8 D IF ED	£579.00
14mm f2.8 D	£1096.00	AF-S 300mm f4 IF ED	£866.00
16mm f2.8 Fisheye	£559.00	AF-D 12-24mm	£729.00
18mm f2.8 D	£1146.00	AF-S 17-35mm f2.8	£1146.00
20mm f2.8 D	£486.00	AF-S DX 17-55mm f2.8	£969.00
24mm f2.8 D	£349.00	AF-S DX18-55mm f3.5-5.6G IF ED	£169.00
28mm f1.4 D	£1489.00	18-35mm f3.5-4.5 D	£338.00
28mm f2.8 D	£189.00	AF-S DX 18-70mm f3.5-4.5 G	£189.00
50mm f1.4D	£216.00	AF-DX VR 18-200mm f3.5-5.6 G	£489.00
50mm f1.8 D	£98.00	24-50mm f3.3-4.5 D	£325.00
85mm f1.4 D IF	£777.00	24-85mm f2.8-4 DIF	£435.00
85mm f1.8 D	£328.00	AF-S 24-85mm f3.5-4.5 G IF-ED	£287.00
105mm f2 D DC	£739.00		
135mm f2 D DC	£899.00		

NEW 300mm f2.8 VR 200mm f2 VR See website for details

AF-S VRG 24-120mm f3.5-5.6 IF ED	£436.00
AF-S 28-70mm f2.8 D	£1148.00
AF-DG 28-200mm f3.5-5.6 AFDH	£189.00
AFS-DX 55-200mm Black or Silver	£165.00
70-200mm VR AFS-G2.8	£1186.00
80-200mm f2.8D ED+CL-43A	£799.00
AF VR 80-400mm f4.5-5.6 DED	£1019.00
AF-S VR 200-400mm f4 G IF ED	£4399.00

See the full range on our website

Nikon

COOLPIX S2
5 mega pixels — 3x Optical Zoom, 35-105mm Zoom

Nikon £239 or £10/mth

COOLPIX S3
6 mega pixels — 3x Zoom-Nikkor ED, 35-105mm Zoom

Nikon £249 or £11/mth

COOLPIX S4
6 mega pixels — 10x Zoom-Nikkor, 38-380mm Zoom

Nikon £259 or £11/mth

COOLPIX P2
5.1 mega pixels — 3.5x Optical Zoom, 38-126mm Zoom

Wi-Fi

Nikon £229 or £10/mth

COOLPIX 7600
7 mega pixels — 3x Optical Zoom, 35-114mm Zoom

Available in Silver or Black

Nikon £209 or £9/mth

COOLPIX 7900
7 mega pixels — 3x Optical Zoom, 38-114mm Zoom

Nikon £249 or £11/mth

COOLPIX S1
5 mega pixels — 3x Optical Zoom, 35-105mm Zoom

Nikon £199 or £9/mth

COOLPIX 8400
8 mega pixels — 3.5x Optical Zoom, 24-85mm Zoom

Nikon £459 or £20/mth

COOLPIX 8800
8 mega pixels — 10x Optical Zoom mm Zoom

Nikon £499 or £21/mth

Coolpix S1	£199.00	Coolpix P2 new	£219.00	Coolpix 7600 new	£209.00
Coolpix S2	£239.00	Coolpix 4600	£129.00	Coolpix 7900 new	£249.00
Coolpix S3 new	£249.00	Coolpix 4800	£169.00	Coolpix 8400	£459.00
Coolpix S4 new	£259.00	Coolpix 5600 new	£139.00	Coolpix 8800	£499.00

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NEW ZIGVIEW - Digital Angle Finder

ZIGVIEW - the worlds first ever Digital Angle Finder, makes low and high level photography easy with its unique rotating LCD monitor.

Simply attach to the eyepiece of your SLR camera where the viewfinder image is captured by a CMOS sensor built into the Zigview and relayed in real time to a 1.9inch TFT colour display for easy viewing at any angle.

Especially useful for low angle photography where you would struggle to see through the viewfinder especially with macro work or high angle situations such as press work.

ZIGVIEW will work with most digital and film SLR cameras and is supplied with an eyepiece adaptor for common Nikon, Fuji and Canon cameras. Other adapters for Konica Minolta and Pentax are available as accessories.

£114.99

NEW ZIGVIEW-R

The world's first TTL Motion Sensor shutter release, Interval & Exposure Timer

based on the original Zigview Digital Angle Finder.

See website for details

only £199.99

only £19.99

DIGITAL CAMERA ACCESSORIES

For a comprehensive list of Digital Camera accessories from all the major manufacturers visit our website

Canon

Tele Converter Lenses

TC-DCS8	£79.00
TC-DCS8B	£99.00
TC-DCS8N	£79.00
TC-DCS8A	£199.00
TC-DCS2	£99.00
TC-DCS2A	£79.00
TC-DCS2B	£99.00
TC-DC10	£99.00

Wide Converter Lenses

WC-DC10	£99.00
WC-DCS8A	£99.00
WC-DCS8N	£109.00
WC-DCS2	£79.00
WC-DCS2A	£99.00

Please note: *A conversion lens adaptor is required for all lenses listed here – see website for details –*

Battery Grips

BG-E1	£79.99
BG-E2	£149.99
BG-E3	£119.99
BG-ED3	£149.99
BG-E4	£169.99

Lith-ion Batteries

BP511A	£54.99
NB1 LH	£35.00
NB2 LH	£45.00
NB3L / 4L	£29.00
NB 4H / 5H / 6N	£35.00

Battery Chargers

CA DC 20E	£45.00
CA 560	£59.99
CB-5L	£39.99
CB2	from £35.00
CBK4	£40.00
Powershot	£40.00
Car Battery Chargers	from £49.00

Canon AC Adaptors from £45.00 – See website for details –

Canon Soft Camera Cases

IXUS	£15.00	SC-DC10	£15.00
SC-PS	All £18.00	SC-DC20	£18.00
DCC 10/20/30	£25.00	SC-DC30	£20.00
DCC 40	£15.00	SC-DC40	£18.00
DCC 50-400	£19.99	SC-DC70	£19.00
DCC BG	£16.00	Leather Case	£15.00

Waterproof Casing

AW DC10-50	£99.00	AW PS200	£149.00
WP DC1-900	£149.00	IXUS 300WPC	£149.00

See Website for the full range of Canon accessories

Olympus

Lenses

Telephoto Lenses

1.7x TCON-17	£89.99
TCON-17C	£109.99
TCON-14D	£149.99

Wide Angle Lenses

0.7x WCON-07	£139.99
WCON-07C	£149.99
WCON-08D	£149.99

Please note: *A conversion lens adaptor is required for all lenses – see website for details*

Batteries & Power

Lith-ion Batteries

LI-30B	£39.99
LI-12B	£29.99
PS-BLM1	£69.99

Power Battery Holders

B-HLD20	£79.99
B-HLD30	£149.99

For list of Chargers & AC Adapters - *see website*

Olympus Cases & Waterproof Cases

Olympus Camera Cases

Compact Easy Leather Case	£14.99
Leather Case for µ[mju:] range	£24.99
BLACK Leather Case for MJU-Mini	£19.99
RED Leather Case for MJU-Mini	£19.99
Leather Case for Ultra Zoom 7 Series	£29.99
Leather Case for FES500	£24.99
Leather Case for C-5060WZ/7070WZ	£24.99

Olympus Underwater Cases

CWPC-01 Outdoor case	£69.99	PT-022 Underwater case	£199.99
PT-016 Underwater case	£119.99	PT-024 Underwater case	£179.99
PT-017 Underwater case	£109.99	PT-020 Underwater case	£199.99

Olympus Flashguns

FL-20 Flash Unit	£119.99
FL-36 Flash Unit	£139.99
FL-50 Flash Unit	£349.99

See Website for the full range of Olympus accessories

Nikon

Remote Cord MC-EU1 *for 880, 885, 4300, 990, 995, 4500, 5000, 5700* ..£99.99

Lenses

Tele Converter Lenses

TC-E2	£105.99		
TC-E3ED	£219.99	FULL RANGE ON OUR WEBSITE	
TC-E3PF	£499.99		
TC-E15ED	£149.99		
TC-E17ED	£329.99		

Wide Converter Lenses

WC-E24	£75.99		
WC-E63	£105.99	FULL RANGE ON OUR WEBSITE	
WC-E68	£139.99		
WC-E75	£179.99		
WC-E80	£149.99		

Fisheye Converters ..... from £249.99

Please note: *A conversion lens adaptor may be required for all lenses listed here - see website for details*

Batteries & Power

Lith-ion Batteries

EN-EL1	£39.99	EN-EL7E	£49.99
EN-EL2	£39.99	EN-EL8	£29.99
EN-EL5	£29.99	EN-MH1	
EN-EL7	£39.99	NIMH	£5.99

Chargers & Adaptors

EH-21	£59.99	MB-	
EH-53	£39.99	ES700	£124.99
EH-54	£29.99	MB-	
EH-60	£39.99	CP10	£124.99
EH-61	£19.99	MB-	
EH-62A	£29.99	CP11	£124.99
EH-62B	£29.99	MH-53	£24.99
EH-62C	£	MH-53C	£49.99
EH-63	£29.99	MH-56	£24.99
MB-		MH-60	£24.99
ES000	£124.99	MH-61	£19.99
		MH-62	£19.99

Coolstation MV-II for S1/S2/S3/S4 ..... £39.99

Nikon Cases For:-

22/32/41/42/52/46/56/76/7900	£19.99
S1/S2/S3/S4	£19.99
P2	£19.99
COOLPIX 995/4500	£29.99
COOLPIX 4800	£24.99
COOLPIX 5000	£29.99
COOLPIX 5700/8700/8800	£29.99
COOLPIX 5400/8400	£29.99

Waterproof Housing

WP-CP1	£169.99
WP-CP2	£169.99
WP-CP3	£149.99

See Website for the full range of Nikon accessories

Pentax

Batteries & Power

Pentax Lith-ion Batteries

D-LI2	£29.99
D-LI7	£39.99
D-LI8	£29.99

Pentax AC Adaptors

K-AC5	£39.99	K-AC8	£39.99
K-AC7	£39.99		

Pentax Camera Cases for...

Optio 30	£14.99
Optio S30/S40/S50	£19.99
Optio 33WR/43WR	£14.99
Optio S5i/S5N/S5Z	£29.99
Optio 750Z	£19.99

See Website for the full range of Pentax accessories

Fujifilm

Lenses & Adaptors

Wide Converter lenses

WL-FX9B	£99.99
WL-FXE01	£69.99

Tele Converter lenses

TL-FX9B	£99.99
TL-FXE01	£69.99

Adaptor Rings

AR-FX9 adaptor for 55mm filter £29.99

Batteries and Power

Lith-ion Batteries

NP-30	£39.99
NP-40	£39.99
NP-60	£39.99
NP-80	£39.99

Chargers

BC-80 Battery recharger	£52.99
BC-65 Battery Charger	£52.99

AC Power Adapters

AC-3V	£29.99
AC-5VH	£29.99
AC-5V Car Adaptor	£29.99

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A330/A340	£14.99	F700/F710/F810	£14.99
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- Easy to use Vari-Programmes

£499.99

Nikon Coolpix 5600	£149.99
Nikon Coolpix 4800	£199.99
Nikon Coolpix 7900	£289.99
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Nikon D70s + 18-70mm	£Web/Call
Nikon D200	£Web/Call
Olympus mju 400 demo	£139.99
Olympus mju Mini S	£199.99
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Pentax Optio 750z	£299.99
Sony Cybershot S40	£139.99
Sony Cybershot N1	£Web/Call
Sony Cybershot W5	£209.99
Sony Cybershot H1	£319.99
Sony Cybershot P200 Kit	£249.99
Sony Cybershot T5	£279.99
Sony Cybershot T7	£299.99
Sony Cybershot R1	£Web/Call

Canon IXUS 750

- 7 Megapixels (Effective)
- 3x Optical Zoom
- Stunning metal body
- Large 2.5" TFT Screen

£349.99

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Sony Cybershot H1

- 5 Million Pixels
- 12x Optical Zoom Lens
- Anti-shake
- Large 2.5" LCD Screen

£319.99

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Pay nothing for three months on any purchase over £300 • Pay nothing for four months on any purchase over £400
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E&OE *Price includes £100 cashback from Canon

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TAMRON

EUROPEAN PHOTO & IMAGING AWARDS TIPA TECHNICAL IMAGE PRESS ASSOCIATION 2005 BEST CONSUMER LENS

Tamron

AF18-200mm f3.5-6.3 XR Di II LD Aspherical [IF] Macro lens

- Powerful 11.1x zoom lens designed for your digital SLR
- Outstanding image quality thanks to Di technology
- Ultracompact and lightweight
- The ultimate zoom lens for digital travel photography

This lens is not designed for use with 35mm film cameras and digital SLR cameras with image sensors larger than 24x16mm

Di II Lenses designed for exclusive use on digital cameras with smaller-size imagers.

£274.99

Available in CAF, NAF, MAF and PAF fittings

Di is the designation Tamron puts on lenses featuring optical systems designed to meet the performance characteristics of digital SLR cameras

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digital compact cameras

Casio Exilim Zoom EX-Z500 Black

JESSOPS EXCLUSIVE!

- 5.0M effective pixels
- 12x zoom (3x optical, 4x digital)
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- Anti-shake DSP
- Extra long battery life

INCLUDES CASE

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£249.99

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50 FREE 7"x5" PHOTOS VOUCHER with all digital cameras Ask for details

HP Photosmart 428 portable photo studio digital camera & printer bundle

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- HP M517 camera - 5.19M effective pixels, 24x zoom (3x optical, 8x digital), 2" screen
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Panasonic DMC-FX9 new

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- 6.0M effective pixels
- 12x zoom, (3x optical, 4x digital)
- 2.5" polycrystalline TFT LCD display

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Samsung Digimax A502

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- 5.0M effective pixels
- 5x digital zoom

new

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HURRY! WHEN IT'S GONE IT'S GONE

WOW! **£79.99**

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- Wireless image transfer
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- Movie mode

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Optional repair protection plan £45

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Canon A410 + case

JESSOPS EXCLUSIVE!

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- 3.2M effective pixels
- 3.2x optical zoom
- 14 shooting modes
- VGA movies up to 3 mins
- Print/Share button

PictBridge

SAVE £20 **£119.99**

was £139.99

Optional repair protection plan £30

Panasonic DMC-FZ30

JESSOPS EXCLUSIVE!

new

- 8.0M effective pixels
- 48x zoom, (12x optical, 4x digital)
- Leica Vario-Elmarit lens
- 32MB memory card included
- 2.0" polycrystalline TFT LCD display

PictBridge

£549.99

Optional repair protection plan £65

digital SLR cameras

Nikon
D50 Silver digital SLR + AF-S 18-55mm lens

FREE VOUCHER BOOK for up to **£400** savings on selected accessories
Ask for details

- 6.1M effective pixels
- 2.5fps, shutter speeds up to 1/4000
- Flash sync speed of 1/500 sec.
- 5-area AF system

PictBridge

SAVE £105 **£494.99** Optional repair protection plan £55
was £599.99

Canon
EOS 350D Silver + 18-55mm Ultrasonic motor lens - for faster focusing

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FREE Canon bag, 256MB memory card from Canon, **voucher book** for up to **£625 cashback** on selected accessories from Canon. Offer ends 31/12/05. See in-store for full details. **100** 7"x5" digital photos

TIPA 2005

- 8.0M effective pixels APS-C CMOS sensor
- 1.8" LCD colour monitor
- Compatible with EF lenses and EX Speedlite flashes

Camera also available in black

PictBridge

SAVE £100 **£599.99** Optional repair protection plan £65
was £698.99

Panasonic
NVGS140 3CCD digital camcorder

JESSOPS EXCLUSIVE!

- 10x optical 500x digital zoom
- 2.5" colour LCD screen
- 2.3 megapixel
- 3CCD

PictBridge

SAVE £100 **£499.99** Optional repair protection plan £75
was £599.99, then £549.99

Sony HDR-HC1 compact high definition digital camcorder

- Carl Zeiss Vario-Sonnar T* with 10x optical zoom
- 2.7" wide hybrid LCD screen & wide colour viewfinder
- 1/3" Primary colour 3 megapixel CMOS sensor

£1499.99 Optional repair protection plan £130
selected stores only

printers

Epson PictureMate 100 Print Direct printer
new

SAVE £25 WHEN BOUGHT WITH ANY DIGITAL CAMERA. Normally £99.99. Ask for details.

£74.99 Optional repair protection plan £25

Epson PictureMate 500 Print Direct printer

SAVE AN EXTRA £25 WHEN BOUGHT WITH ANY DIGITAL CAMERA. Ask for details.

SAVE £30 **£149.99** Optional repair protection plan £35
was £179.99

HP PhotoSmart 8250 single ink A4 Photo printer

SAVE £50 WHEN BOUGHT WITH ANY DIGITAL CAMERA OR DIGITAL SLR. Normally £149.99. Ask for details.

£99.99 Optional repair protection plan £35

HP 475 Print Direct 5"x7" printer
new

SAVE £50 WHEN BOUGHT WITH ANY DIGITAL CAMERA OR DIGITAL SLR. Normally £199.99. Ask for details.

£149.99 Optional repair protection plan £35

scanners

Primefilm 7250U

- 7200 x 3600dpi optical resolution
- Scans 35mm negative film (B&W and colour)

ICE

£189.99 Optional repair protection plan £30

Epson Perfection 4490 Photo
new

- 4800dpi CCD scanner
- 4 push buttons – new Scan-to-PDF
- D-ICE dust & scratch removal (film)

£199.99 Optional repair protection plan £35

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bags and cases

Billingham

Photo Hadley (black/khaki/olive canvas)
250mm x 345mm x 120mm £99.99
Hadley Pro (khaki canvas/tan trim) £109.99

Case Logic

QPB1 Small digital case black £9.99
QPB2 Compact digital case black £11.99
QPB4 Compact camcorder case new £19.99

Centon Cam-bag Duo

Waterproofed nylon bag with shoulder strap and carry handles. Splits into two bags for ease of use. 2-year warranty.

Cam-Bag Duo 1 (black)
160mm x 100mm x 200mm £29.99
Cam-Bag Duo 2 (black)
230mm x 100mm x 210mm £34.99
Cam-Bag Duo 4 (black)
280mm x 100mm x 230mm £39.99

Centon leather cases

Beautifully crafted, high quality, real leather cases with lifetime warranty. Ideal for digital cameras.

Leather case Cam 5
90mm x 55mm x 35mm £10.99
Leather case Cam 7
100mm x 55mm x 40mm £12.99
Leather case Cam 10
140mm x 100mm x 60mm £17.99
Leather case Cam 12
115mm x 165mm x 60mm £24.99

Centon/Jessops

Ideal accessory cases which hold memory cards and batteries. 2 year warranty.

Centon Memory card wallet
Takes up to eight cards £4.49
Centon Digi-case MB
Takes four memory cards and eight batteries (size AA or AAA) £5.49
Jessops Memory card cases
Pack of 3 ..... £5.49

Crumpler

Crumpler Bags are made of the best new tech materials. Dupont Cordura, plus ripstop lining, unbreakable size 10 zips, industrial seat belt webbing and very strong belt buckles. Crumpler bags are tough, waterproof, spongy, strong and stylish.
e.g. The Crisp E1800 (red/black/green/blue/grey)
120mm x 130mm x 70mm £34.99

Jessops Media Gel cases

Stylish, yet rugged cases designed to store memory cards. 2 year warranty.

CompactFlash – capacity 4 ..... £5.99
MemoryStick – capacity 8 ..... £5.99
SmartMedia – capacity 4 ..... £5.99
xD – capacity 8 ..... £5.99
SD/MMC – capacity 8 ..... £5.99

Jessops Media Safe

Attractive aluminium clad cases designed to protect valuable memory cards. 2 year warranty.

CompactFlash – capacity 4 ..... £9.99
MemoryStick – capacity 8 ..... £9.99
SmartMedia – capacity 4 ..... £9.99
SD/MMC – capacity 4 ..... £9.99

Jessops Cam cases

Strong, lockable, hard carry cases which provide a high level of protection for photo, camcorder and digital equipment. Replacement diced foam inserts and partitions are also available. 2 year warranty.

Cam case 40
280mm x 170mm x 80mm £19.99
Cam case 50
345mm x 260mm x 105mm £22.99
Cam case 60
440mm x 300mm x 130mm £29.99
Cam case 70
480mm x 350mm x 150mm £39.99
Cam case 90
385mm x 235mm x 180mm £54.99
Jessops diced foam CC40 ..... £5.99
Jessops diced foam CC50 ..... £6.49
Jessops diced foam CC60 ..... £6.99
Jessops diced foam CC70 ..... £7.49
Jessops case partition 49mm x 7mm £5.49

Jessops Digi cases

Versatile range of cases, exclusively made by Lowepro for Jessops. Ideal for protecting compact digital cameras or camcorders. Comes with lifetime warranty.

Digi case small
105mm x 80mm x 40mm £9.99
Digi case medium
120mm x 105mm x 50mm £11.99
Digi case large
155mm x 100mm x 50mm £13.99
Digi case extra large
160mm x 150mm x 60mm £15.99

Jessops Kamala

A range of seven contemporary designed cases, ideal for both digital and conventional cameras. 2 year warranty.

Compact case small
110mm x 75mm x 40mm £5.99
Compact case medium
110mm x 70mm x 50mm £7.99
Compact case large
130mm x 90mm x 50mm £9.99
Action belt
220mm x 140mm x 80mm £16.99
Action bag small
200mm x 120mm x 145mm £29.99
Action bag medium
235mm x 140mm x 155mm £34.99
Backpack
380mm x 260mm x 150mm £39.99

Jessops Monaco

Made from stylish, blue crinkled nylon with contrasting green trim, this range of eight bags and cases provides protection for cameras, camcorders and binoculars. 2 year warranty.

Compact case small
65mm x 30mm x 110mm £4.99
Compact case medium
95mm x 45mm x 125mm £5.99
Cam holster medium
180mm x 100mm x 170mm £12.99
Action bag small
130mm x 80mm x 145mm £13.99
Action bag medium
190mm x 90mm x 165mm £16.99
Action bag large
205mm x 100mm x 205mm £19.99
Cam-bag Duo-1
240mm x 190mm x 100mm £24.99

Jessops Pacific

The Jessops Pacific range is a co-ordinated range of gadget bags which combine stylish good looks with durability. Lightweight, but incredibly strong, the Pacific range is constructed from high density foam, covered in black polyester with a waterproofed PVC lining. 2 year warranty.

Compact case small
125mm x 80mm x 40mm £8.99
Compact case medium
150mm x 80mm x 45mm £9.49
Compact case large
155mm x 80mm x 65mm £9.99
Lens case small
90mm x 100mm £7.99
Lens case medium
90mm x 150mm £8.49
Lens case large
90mm x 190mm £8.99
Galapogos bag (black)
230mm x 130mm x 134mm £34.99
Kiribati bag (black)
280mm x 145mm x 150mm £39.99
Nauru bag (black)
320mm x 155mm x 180mm £44.99
Palmyra bag (black)
360mm x 195mm x 185mm £49.99
Many more styles and sizes available. Ask in-store for details.

Jessops soft compact case

Leather-look case. Ideal for compact cameras. 2 year warranty.

145mm x 70mm x 40mm £5.99

Jessops Fastnet

A range of over 30 cases in a stylish modern two-tone design made with durable waterproofed material. 2 year warranty. Available in blue or black.

Compact case small
90mm x 65mm x 40mm £6.99
Compact case medium
120mm x 85mm x 45mm £7.49
Mini bag
75mm x 130mm x 90mm £15.99
Action bag small
100mm x 115mm x 50mm £8.99
Action bag medium
100mm x 115mm x 50mm £10.99
Photo bag small
80mm x 200mm x 100mm £29.99
Photo bag medium
140mm x 220mm x 115mm £34.99
Many more styles and sizes available. Ask in-store for details.

Lowepro

D-Res Specially designed for digital cameras. Black and silver 'hi-tech' style, soft tricot anti-scratch lining. Outward facing zip to reduce scratch risk. All AW cases feature all-weather cover.

D-Res Pouch 8S
digital case was £12.99 HALF PRICE £6.49
D-Res Pouch 8
digital case was £13.99 HALF PRICE £6.99
D-Res Pouch 8M digital case £13.99
D-Res Pouch 10AW digital case £14.99
D-Res Pouch 25AW digital case £18.99
Edit 100 digital
camera case was £16.99 HALF PRICE £8.49
Top Load Zoom Mini black camera case £18.99
Rezo TLZ10 digital camera case £21.99
Rezo TLZ20 digital camera case £26.99

Samsonite

All bags are made from waterproof, durable and AZO-free polytex material

Trekking Premium DF9
digital compact case £12.99
Trekking Premium DF10
digital compact case £12.99
Trekking Premium DF20
digital compact case £12.99
Trekking Premium DF22
digital compact case £12.99
Trekking Premium DFV 40
digital/video case £24.99
Trekking Premium DFV 44
digital/video case £27.99
Makemo 10 digital compact case £14.99
Makemo 16 digital compact case £14.99

FREE Hama Digipod normal price £7.99 when you buy a Samsonite Trekking Premium case
Ask for details. While stocks last

Please note: bags and cases do not include any camera equipment or accessories pictured.

a small selection of accessories

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Best DVD+R 4.7GB, 16x, printable, cake pack of 25 was ~~£23.99~~ **SAVE £5** then ~~£19.99~~ £15.99

TDK CDR 80 min, 52x, pack of 25 was ~~£6.99~~ **SAVE £2** £4.99

TDK CDR 80 min, 52x, pack of 50 was ~~£11.99~~ **SAVE £2** £9.99

inkjet paper

Jessops inkjet photo paper 6x4" gloss 50 sheets normally ~~£5.99~~ **HALF PRICE** £2.99

Epson Premium Gloss Photo Paper A4 pack of 20 was ~~£12.99~~ **HALF PRICE** £6.49

Epson Premium Gloss Paper 5"x7" pack of 100 was ~~£13.99~~ **HALF PRICE** £6.99

Kodak Premium Picture Paper Ultra Gloss A4 pack of 20 was ~~£11.99~~ **HALF PRICE** £5.99

Kodak Inkjet Premium Picture Paper 4x6" pack of 75 was ~~£19.99~~ **HALF PRICE** £9.99

Jessops inkjet cartridges

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- Includes 4AA and 4AAA NiMh batteries

new

£9.99

BC500

Jessops AA and AAA Alkaline batteries

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Jessops digital camera power adapter

- Universal AC/DC adapter for powering most digital cameras
- Worldwide voltage compatible

£19.99

Jessops NiMh batteries

3 for 2

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Buy any three battery packs and get the cheapest free

12 from £9.98

not in conjunction with any other offer

Jessops Cam Charger

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100% compatible or your money back*

* If not compatible, additional free adapter plate may be required - see packaging for details (UK only) Ask for details.

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- Accepts all current popular memory card formats

was ~~£14.99~~

£12.99

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512MB CF 100x speed	£54.99
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512MB SD 80x speed	£59.99
1GB SD 80x speed	£99.99
2GB SD 80x speed	£199.99

Jessops Space Astronomy software

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- For all-weather long distance observation

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- Processing included*

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*6x6" 48 hour service. Upgrades available

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WITH ANY PURCHASE OVER £5

- Rugged, foldable roof prism design

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Velbon Luxi F tripod

SAVE £30

- Compact and lightweight
- For digital, film and video cameras

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SAVE OVER £23 on individual selling prices

INCLUDES MONEY SAVING VOUCHERS WORTH OVER £100

Includes:

- Centon Digicase M8
- Jessops Digipod Extendible
- Jessops Academy 7"x 5" album
- Jessops LCD screen protectors
- Jessops Lens/camera cleaning kit
- Jessops Battery charger and 8 2000mAh NiMH AA batteries

£24.99

Jessops video accessory kit

SAVE OVER £22 on individual selling prices

INCLUDES MONEY SAVING VOUCHERS WORTH OVER £100

Includes:

- Jessops LCD screen protectors
- Jessops lens/camera cleaning kit
- Jessops Fastnet Cambag
- DVM60 Mini DV tapes (5 pack)

£24.99

Jessops digipod

HALF PRICE WHEN BOUGHT WITH ANY DIGITAL CAMERA

- Ball & socket head
- Quick release platform

SAVE £6.50

normal price ~~£12.99~~ £6.49

Jessops filter kits

Ideal for digital and video camcorders. Includes UV Protector, Circular Polariser and Neutral Density x4. Available in 27, 30.5 and 37mm.

£24.99

Portaflash Studio kit 2

SAVE OVER £23 on individual sell prices

Includes two flash heads and all the necessary components required to start portrait photography

£299.99

many more accessories available! See in-store for details

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Authorised Stockist

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Tel: 020 7637 3727 Fax: 020 7637 3728
Mon-Sat 9.30am - 6.30pm Sun 11am - 5pm

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SONY

* 7.0 Mega Pixel
* 3x Optical Zoom
* 2.5" LCD
* Super HAD CCD
* M32Mb Internal Memory + slot
* Sony's Real Image Processor
* AAA Batteries

DSC T7
SONY

* 5.1 Mega Pixel
* 2.5" LCD
* Super slim
* Zeiss lens

DSC H1
SONY

* 4.0 Mega Pixel
* 3x Optical Zoom
* Quick Startup
* Carl Zeiss Vario Tessar Lens
* MPEG Movie VX
* Steady Shot
* 4" LCD

DSC R1
SONY

* 10.3 Mega Pixel
* ISO 160-3200
* 24 mm - 120 mm
* Free Angle LCD

DSC P200
SONY

* 7.2 Mega Pixel
* 3x Optical
* 2.5" LCD
* Zeiss Con S

DMC FZ30
Panasonic

* Leica Lens
* 12x Optical Zoom
* 8 Megapixel
* Optical Stabiliser

DMC LX1
Panasonic

* Leica Lens
* 4x Optical Zoom
* 8.4 Megapixel CCD
* Optical Stabiliser

D50
Nikon

* 6.1 Mega Pixel
* 55-200mm
* 2" LCD
* Flash Hot shoe

D70s SLR
Nikon

* 6.1 Million
* SFP's
* 18-70mm lens
* 5 Area A/F

COOLPIX P1
Nikon

* 8 Mega Pixel
* 3.5x Optical Zoom
* Wireless (802.11b/g)
* 2.5" LCD Display

COOLPIX S3
Nikon

* 6 Megapixel
* Ultra Slim Body
* 2.5" LCD Screen
* 3x Optical Zoom
* Nikkor ED Lens

E-500
OLYMPUS

* 8 million pixels
* 2.5" H.Crystal LCD
* Full manual control
* Full Frame CCD

SP-500
OLYMPUS

* 10x Optical Zoom
* 6 Megapixel
* Large 6.4cm LCD
* Macro up to 3cm

MJU 800
OLYMPUS

* 3x Optical Zoom
* 8 Megapixel
* Weatherproof
* ISO 64-1600

DYNAX 5D
MINOLTA

* 6.1 Megapixel
* Antishake
* 18-70 DT Lines

IXUS 750
Canon

* 7.1 Mega Pixel
* 3x Optical
* PIC Bridge
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FL-BX01 Flash Bracket £79.99
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FL-CB01 Flash Extension £49.99

i-Tank 3 30gig
Robust and reliable portable Hard drive
£99.99 Complete Kit
2 Year Warranty

Canon 9950F Scanner
A4 with full Neg and Slide facilities
£279.95 2 YEAR W'TY

Epson Photo 2400
A3 Photo Printer
£539.99
2 Year Warranty

Minolta 7D
Body Only
£679.99
Free Shipping - 2 year Warranty

Canon 20D
Lens Kit 18/55 £879.99
Body only **£799.99**
Price incl. £100 Canon Cashback

Canon Pixma
IP4200 £99.99
New Canon Photo Printer

Canon 350D
Lens Kit 18/55 **£599.99**
Body only **£529.99**
Free Shipping & 2 Years Warranty

Nikon D50 18/55 Zoom
£479.99
Body **£419.99 Free Shipping**
2 Years Warranty

Lenses & Accessories

TCON14 Telephoto 1.4x ~~£49.99~~ £29
TCON17 Telephoto 1.7x ~~£89.99~~ £69
TCON17C Telephoto 1.7x ~~£109.99~~ £79
WCON 07 Wide 07x £139.99
WCON 07C Wide 07x £149.99
MCON 40 Macro £68.99
CLA-7 Adaptor £34.99
CLA-6 Adaptor £29.99
CLA-4/5 Adaptor £19.99
TCON-14B 200 mm lens £179.99
WCON-08B 28mm lens £169.99
5060 Filter UV/Pol/Protect £29.99
5060 LCD Hood £19.99

Sigma Flashguns
Canon or Nikon
- EF500 Super DG TTL £149.99
- EF500 ST DG TTL £99.99
- EM 140 DG Ring Flash Macro £269.99

Neg & Slide Scanners

MINOLTA
- Scan Dual 4 £219.99
- Scan Elite 5400 II £499.99
- Scan Multi Pro £1799.99
- Scan Multi II £799.99
- AD-10 APS Adaptor £89.95

NIKON
- Coolscan V £449.99
- Coolscan 5000 £779.99
- Coolscan 9000 £2199.99

REFLECTA
- iScan 1800 £79.99
- iScan 3600 £99.99
- SilverScan 3600 £119.99
- Crystalscan 3600 £149.99
- Crystalscan 7200 £179.99
- ProScan 3600 £249.99
- ProScan 4000 £299.99
- RPS 3600 £299.99
- RPS 7200 £359.99
- DigitDia 4000 £579.99

Flatbed Scanners

CANON
- 4200F £69.99
- 8000F £129.99
- 8400F £139.99
- 9900F £249.99
- 9950F £279.99
- LiDE 500F £109.99

EPSON
Perfection
- 3490 Photo £79.99
- 3590 Photo £109.99
- 4490 Photo £189.99
- 4990 Photo £349.99

MICROTEK
ScanMaker
- 4900 Plus ~~£99.99~~ £90
- 6800 £299.99
- i700 £289.99
- i900 £569.99

Printers

CANON
- Photo i9950 £399.99
- Pixma IP4200 £99.99
- Pixma IP5200 £129.99
- Pixma IP5200R £149.99
- Pixma IP6000D £129.99
- Pixma IP8500 £239.99
- i6500 £279.99
- Pixma IP90 £184.99
- DS700 £99.99
- PIXMA MP-760 £199.99

EPSON
- PictureMate £124.99
- PictureMate 500 £164.99
- Photo R220 £69.99
- Photo R240 £94.99
- Photo R320 £129.99
- Photo R340 £139.99
- Photo R800 £218.99
- Photo R1800 £359.99
- Photo R2400 £539.99

Dye Sub Printers

CANON
- SELPHY CP500 £89.99
- SELPHY CP510 £109.99

with Canon Ixus 50 £269.99
- SELPHY CP710 £129.99

KP-36IP Paper £11.99
KP-118IP Paper £27.99

FUJI
Printpix CX400 £299.99
RK-SD40 40 x 6/4 Paper Roll £12.99

HI-TOUCH
- 641PS £179.99
50 sheets of 4x6 £16.99
- 730PS £297.99

£30Trade-in on your old printer until 31.1. 06
60 sheets of 4x6 £17.99
30 sheets of 6x8 £19.99
30 sheets of 5x7 £14.99

OLYMPUS
- P440 £329.99
- P11 £99.99

P-A5NE A5 x 25 sheets £29.99
P-A4NE A4 x 100 sheets £79.99
P-RBNE Ribbon for 50 x A4 £59.99
P-P40 for P10 x 40 sheets £19.99
P-P100 for P10 x 100 sheets £29.99

Memory Cards

Compact Flash
Dane Elec • 10 Year Warranty
16MB £6.80
32MB £7.99
64MB £9.49
128MB £12.49
256MB £17.49
512MB £29.49
1GB £49.49

Microdrives
1 GB Hitachi £49.99
2 GB Hitachi £79.99
4 GB Hitachi £129.99
Travel Kits ~~£10.00~~ £9

Lexar CF
5 Year Warranty
128MB 12 x speed £17.99
256MB 12 x speed £22.99
512MB 12 x speed £34.99
256MB 40 x speed £26.99
512MB 40 x speed £39.99
1GB 40 x speed £69.99
2GB 40 x speed £134.99
512MB 80 x speed £44.99
1GB 80 x speed Pro £74.99
2GB 80 x speed Pro £144.99

Sandisk
10 Year Warranty
256mb CF Ultra II £27.99
512mb CF Ultra II £35.49
1gig CF Ultra II £66.49
2gig CF Ultra II £133.49
1gig CF Extreme III £87.49
2gig CF Extreme III £169.49
512mb SD Ultra II £37.49
1gig SD Ultra II £67.49
1gig SD Extreme III £89.99

Smart Media
10 Year Warranty
16MB £9.99
32MB £12.99
64MB £19.99
128MB £29.99

Lexar Memory Stick
64MB Classic £14.49
256MB Pro £34.80
1Gig Pro £99.80

Secure Digital
10 Year Warranty
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128MB 12x Speed £14.49
256mb 12x Speed £24.49
512mb 12x Speed £34.49
1Gig 12x Speed £59.99
128MB 60x Speed £19.49
256MB 60x Speed £29.49
512MB 60x Speed £39.49
1Gig 60x Speed £59.49

xD - Picture Card
32mb £9.49
64mb £14.49
128mb £17.49
256mb £29.49
512mb £49.49
1gig £69.49
128mb plus Reader £29.99

Card Readers

MICROTECH CameraMate
USB for CF •CF2 MD SM £9.99
USB for MS •CF CF2 MD £9.99
PARALLEL PORT for SM only £19.99
PARALLEL PORT for CF only £19.99
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LEXAR 8-IN-1 READER £19.99
LEXAR Memory Stick Reader £10
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DF USB SM £5
Dual CF and SM £9.99
xD £12.99
SD/MM £19.99
SANDISK SD/MM USB2 £19.99

General Accessories

Ohnar Digi Slide Duplicator £69.9
Ohnar Digi Zoom Slide Duplicator £89.99
Sunpak Remotelite 2 Flash £29.99
Kenro Compact Digital Flash Kit £249.99

Kinetronics

Optics First Aid Kit £18.95
Camera CleanCam Kit £10.95
Digital Scanner Glass Cleaning Kit £10.95

Tripods

Pocket Tripod £3.99
Velbon CX-444 £29.99
Velbon CX-560 £39.99
Velbon Maxi 347E £49.99
VelbonMini-2 £19.99
Velbon UB-40 Monopod £19..99
Velbon UB-43 Monopod £27.99
Slik XL £19.99
Manfrotto 714SHB £49.99
Manfrotto 714B £54.99
Manfrotto 718B £64.99
Manfrotto 718SHB £59.99

Filters

Cokin Digital Filter Kit G300 £19.99
Cokin Digital Filter Kit G350 £24.99
Cokin Digital Filter Kit G400 £34.99
28mm Lens Protection £12.99
43mm Lens Protection £12.99
43mm Neutral Density £19.99
Hoya 43mm Skylight 1B £16.99
Hoya 43mm Pol £18.99
Hoya 49mm UV/Haze £8.99
Hoya 49mm Skylight 1B £9.99
Hoya 49mm Pol £18.99
Hoya 49mm Warm CPol £38.99
Hoya 49mm Infra Red R72 £28.99
Hoya 52mm CPol 1 Digipro £79.99
Hoya 52mm Protect 1 Digipro £29.99
Hoya 52mm UV/Haze £8.99
Hoya 52mm Skylight 1B £9.99
Hoya 52mm CPol £25.99
Hoya 52mm Pol £19.99
Hoya 52mm CPol 1 Digipro £79.99
Hoya 52mm Protect 1 Digipro £29.99
Hoya 52mm Warm CPol £42.99
Hoya 52mm Infra Red R72 £39.99
Hoya 55mm UV/Haze £11.99
Hoya 55mm Skylight 1B £12.99
Hoya 55mm CPol £27.99
Hoya 55mm Pol £22.99
Hoya 55mm CPol 1 Digipro £32.99
Hoya 55mm Protect 1 Digipro £29.99
Hoya 55mm Warm CPol £44.99
Hoya 55mm Infra Red R72 £34.99
Hoya 58mm UV/Haze 11.99
Hoya 58mm Skylight 1B £12.99
Hoya 58mm CPol £32.99
Hoya 58mm Pol £24.99
Hoya 58mm CPol 1 Digipro £89.99
Hoya 58mm Protect 1 Digipro £34.99
Hoya 58mm Warm CPol £48.99
Hoya 58mm Infra Red R72 £38.99
Hoya 62mm UV/Haze £14.99
Hoya 62mm Skylight 1B £15.99
Hoya 62mm CPol £44.99
Hoya 62mm Pol £26.99
Hoya 62mm CPol 1 Digipro £99.99
Hoya 62mm Protect 1 Digipro £39.99
Hoya 62mm Warm CPol £55.99
Hoya 62mm Infra Red R72 £44.99
Hoya 67mm UV/Haze £19.99
Hoya 67mm Skylight 1B £21.99
Hoya 67mm CPol £49.99
Hoya 67mm Pol £32.99
Hoya 67mm CPol 1 Digipro £114.99
Hoya 67mm Protect 1 Digipro £44.99
Hoya 67mm Warm CPol £64.99
Hoya 67mm Infra Red R72 £64.99
Hoya 72mm UV/Haze £24.99
Hoya 72mm Skylight !B £26.99
Hoya 72mm CPol £54.99
Hoya 72mm Pol £44.99
Hoya 72mm Warm CPol £74.99
Hoya 72mm Infra Red R72 £99.99
Hoya 72mm CPol 1 Digipro £74.99
Hoya 72mm Protect 1 Digipro £49.99
Hoya 77mm UV/Haze £29.99
Hoya 77mm Skylight 1B £32.99
Hoya 77mm CPol £59.99
Hoya 77mm Pol £54.99
Hoya 77mm Warm CPol £89.99
Hoya 77mm Infra Red R72 £169.99
Hoya 77mm CPol 1 Digital £139.99
Hoya 77mm Protect 1 Digital £49.99
Hoya 82mm UV/Haze £39.99
Hoya 82mm Skylight 1B £44.99
Hoya 82mm CPol £79.99
Hoya 82mm Pol £77.99
Hoya 82mm CPol 1 Digital £169.99
Hoya 82mm Protect 1 Digital £69.99
Hoya 86mm Skylight 1B £64.99
Hoya 58mm Pro UV/Haze £27.99
Hoya 58mm Pro Skylight 1B £29.99
Hoya 58mm Pro CPol £69.99
Hoya 62mm Pro UV/Haze £29.99
Hoya 62mm Pro Skylight 1B £32.99
Hoya 62mm Pro CPol £79.99
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Hoya 67mm Pro Skylight 1B £36.99
Hoya 67mm Pro CPol £89.99
Hoya 72mm Pro UV/Haze £37.99
Hoya 72mm Pro Skylight 1B £41.99
Hoya 72mm Pro CPol £114.99
Hoya 77mm Pro UV/Haze £39.99
Hoya 77mm Pro Skylight 1B £44.99
Hoya 77mm Pro CPol £134.99
Hoya 82mm Pro UV/Haze £44.99
Hoya 82mm Pro Skylight 1B £49.99
Hoya 82mm Pro CPol £179.99

Belkin USB/FW Hubs

4-Port Hub USB1 Special £9.99
7-Port Port Hub USB £29.99
Multi Port Hub USB £49.99
4-Port Hub Fire Wire £49.99

Wacom Graphic Tablets

Intuos2 A6 £129.99
Graphire 3 Classic £59.99
Graphire 3 Photo Studio USB £89.99

Chargers/Batteries

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HL80 Battery (Fuji, Kodak) £29.99
HL-E1 Battery (Nikon) £24.99
HL-1L Battery (Canon) £19.99
HL-2L Battery (Canon) £19.99
HL-511 Battery (Canon) £34.99
HL-200 Battery (Minolta) £19.99
HL-400 Battery (Minolta) £39.99
HL-10B Battery (Olympus) £19.99
Uniross XPress 150 Charger Kit £16.99
4 x 1800mAH Batteries £7.99
4 x 2000mAH Batteries £9.99
4 x 2500mAH Batteries £12.99
GP Powerbank Charger kit £24.99
Ansman PhotoCam 2 Charger Kit £19.99
Ansman Digi Speed 4 Charger Kit £39.99

Memory Storage

Photainer 30gig £249.99
Photainer 40gig £289.99
Photainer 80gig £359.99
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Car Adaptor £29.99
Innoplus i-With 40gig £289.99
Innoplus i-With 80gig £359.99
I-Tank 3 30gig £99.99
I-Tank 3 60gig £129.99
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Flashtrax XT 40gig £268.99
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Case £16.99
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D-Res 30AW £17.99
D-Res 25AW £15.99
D-Res 20AW £14.99
D-Res 10AW £12.99
D-Res 8 Pouch £12.99
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D-Res 9 Pouch £12.99
D-Res 4M Pouch £11.99
D-Res TL10 £21.99
D-Res TL20 £26.99
Rezo 10 £9.99
Rezo 15 £10.99
Rezo 40 £15.99
Rezo 110AW £19.99
Rezo 120AW £24.99
Rezo 140AW £29.99
Rezo 160AW £34.99
Nova 1 £26.99
Nova 2 £32.99
Nova 3 £36.99
Mini Trekker AW £44.99
Computer Trekker AW £99.99
Computer Trekker AW Plus £169.99
Photo Trekker Classic £99.99
Orion Trekker II £49.99
Toploader 65AW £39.99
Toploader Zoom Mini £17.99
D-Res 6 Card/Batt Wallet £9.99
D-Res 4 Memory Wallet £7.99

Printer Consumables

Epson Paper
SO41054 A6 50 matt 144g £6.99
SO41061 A4 100 matt 102g £9.99
SO41068 A3 100 matt 105g £32.99
SO41121 5x8 30 matt 188g £5.99
SO41122 8x10 30 matt 188g £14.99
SO41125 A3 20 gloss 141g £17.99
SO41126 A4 20 gloss 141g £5.99
SO41134 4x6 20 194g £5.99
SO41140 A4 20 194g £7.99
SO41142 A3 20 194g £18.99
SO41143 A3+ 20 194g £22.99
SO41177 A4 10 194g £5.99
SO41256 A4 50 matt 167g £8.99
SO41261 A3 50 matt 167g £21.99
SO41264 A3+ 50 167g £29.99
SO41287 A4 20 gloss 255g £11.99
SO41303 100mmx8m matt 192g £9.99
SO41315 A3 20 gloss 255g £25.99
SO41316 A3+ 20 gloss 255g £33.99
SO41328 A3+ 20 s/gloss 251g £34.99
SO41330 100mmx8m s/gloss 251g £12.99
SO41332 A4 20 s/gloss 251g £11.99
SO41334 A3 50 s/gloss 192g £29.99
SO41336 210mmx10m s/gloss 251g £29.99
SO41338 329mmx10m s/gloss 251g £49.99
SO41340 A3+ 50 matt 192g £33.99
SO41342 A4 50 matt 192g £10.99
SO41344 A3 50 matt 192g £26.99
SO41352 A3+ 20 matt 188g £22.99
SO41377 210mmx10m gloss 251g £29.99
SO41442 A4 500 100g £9.99
SO41560 A4 20 satin 245g £14.99
SO41561 A3+ 20 245g £42.99
SO41622 A4 50 194g £16.99
SO41624 A4 50 255g £22.99
SO41729 4x6 50 £5.99

Epson Colour Ink
Inkset for 200/300/320 £56.70
Inkset for 800/1800 £85.42
Inkset for 2400 £85.42
T5570 PicturePack £24.99
TO01011 £19.99
TO09 £17.99
SO20193/SO20110 £14.99
TO08 £13.99
SO20191 £19.99
SO20089 £19.99
T027 £16.99
TO16 £29.99
TO322 £11.99
TO323 £11.99
TO324 £11.99
TO325 £28.99
TO29 £20.99
T0332 - 336 £10.49
T0342 - 346 £12.99
TO422/3/4 £11.49
T041 £20.99
T0482 - 486 £9.99
T0540 £5.99
T0542/3//4/7/9 £11.99
T0592 - 595 £9.99

Epson Black Ink
SO20189 £19.99
SO20093/SO20187 £14.99
TO07 £16.99
TO07 x 2 £28.99
TO15 £24.99
TO26 £21.99
TO28 £24.99
TO321 £26.99
T0331 £10.49
T0341 £10.49
T0347 £12.49
T0348 £10.49
T040 £24.99
T0481 £9.99
T0541 £11.99
T0548 £11.99
T0592 - 595 £9.99
T0591/597/598 £9.99

Canon Ink
BC1-6 each £7.99
BC13EC/EM/EY each £6.99
BC13EBK £8.49
BC1-24BK £5.99
BC24BK Twin £9.99
BC1-24C £11.49
BC1-24C Twin £18.99
BC1-15 Twin Black £22.99
BC1-15 Twin Colour £14.99
5-ink set BCI-3 bk, BCI-6 bk, C, M, Y £38.42
6-ink set BCI-6 bk, C, PC, M, PM, Y £45.52
8-ink set BCI-6 bk, C,PC,M,PM,Y,G,R £60.72

Canon Paper
HR-101 A3 Gloss 100g 20 £3.99
HR-101 A3 Gloss 100g 100 £19.99
HR-101 A4 Gloss 100g 200 £18.99
HR-101 A4 Gloss 100g 50 4.99
GP-301 A3 Gloss 160g 20 £13.99
GP-401 A4 Gloss 160g 20 £6.99
PR-101 4x6 Gloss 245g 20 £5.49
PR-101 A3 Gloss 245g 10 £22.99
PR-101 A4 Gloss 245g 15 £8.99
PP-101 A4 Gloss 20 £7.99
PP-101 A3 Gloss 20 £19.99
PP-101 5x7 Gloss 20 £5.49
PP-101 4x6 Gloss 20 £2.99
SG-101 A4 Semi Gloss 20 £8.99
SG-101 4x6 Semi Gloss 20 £3.99
SG-101 A3 Semi Gloss 20 £22.99
MP-101 A4 Matte 50 £7.99
MP-101 A3 Matte 40 £13.99
KP-36IP Paper & Ribbon(36) £11.99
KC-36IP Paper & Ribbon(36) £7.99

Olympus Paper & Ribbon
A6 Paper & Ribbon (60) £29.99
Ribbon for 50 A4 (P400/440) £59.99
A4 Paper (100) (P400/440) £79.99
A5+ Paper (25) (P400) £34.99
MP-10IJ4E 10 x A4 Glossy £16.99

Hewlett Packard Ink
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hp58 £17.49
hp59 £21.99

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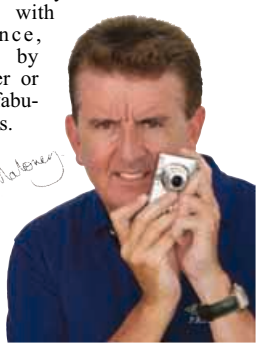

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Other Cameras/ Specials

PowerShot A410 New	£119.99*
PowerShot A520	£169.99*
Powershot A95 + DCC 40 Case	£199.99*
PowerShot A610 New	£229.99*
PowerShot A620 New	£259.99*
Digital Ixus i5 (4 Only)	£159.99*
Digital Ixus i zoom New	£269.99*
Digital Ixus 55 New	£273.00*
Digital Ixus Wireless New	£Phone
Digital Ixus 700	£274.99*
Digital Ixus 750 New	£339.00*
PowerShot S70	£284.99*
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Flashguns & Accessories

Speedlite 430EX	£169.00*
Speedlite 550EX	£199.00*
Speedlite 580EX	£294.99*
Speedlite 580EX + ST-E2	£409.99*
Macrolite MT-14EX	£329.00*
Macrolite MT-24EX	£589.00*
Speedlite Transmitter ST-E2	£134.99*
Speedlite Bracket SB-E1	£114.99*
Compact Battery Pack CP-E3	£119.99*

Please see website or call for flash cords, macrolite adaptors and other accessories

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RS80N3 (20D/ 1D/ 1Ds/ Mk II)	£38.00*
TC80N3 (20D/ 1D/ 1Ds/ Mk II)	£88.00*
RS60E3 (350D)	£22.00*

Cases

DCC-40 Soft Case for Powershot A95	£10.00*
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lens sold separately Body SRP £1299.99

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- 10.2 Mega Pixels
- 5 frames per second
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- 12.4Mp CMOS
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D2X + Capture 4.3	£2949.00

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Nikon D70s

- 6.1 megapixel
- 0.2s start up time
- Long Battery Life

Our Price **£589.99***

lens sold separately Body SRP £699.99

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D70s + 18-70mm	£749.99
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- 6 Mega Pixels
- 2.5 fps
- Extra large 2.0" LCD Screen

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D50 + 18-70mm + 512MB SD	£619.99
D50 + Sigma 18-50mm f3.5-5.6	£469.99

Nikon Flashguns

Speedlight SB800	£287.00*
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Speedlight SB29S	£329.99*
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SC19 TTL Multi Flash Sync	£47.50*
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AS15 Hot Shoe Adaptor	£18.99
AS10 TTL Multi Flash Adaptor	£44.99*
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Nikon D100

- 6.1 megapixel
- Excellent Build Quality

SRP £1299.99 lens sold separately

D100 Body	£699.00
D100 + 18-70mm DX	£869.00
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Coolpix S1 Silver

- 5.1 million pixels
- 3 x optical zoom
- Ultra Slim Design

Our Price **£214.99**

SRP £249.99

Fuji 256MB SD + Nikon Leather Case **£253.99***

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AF-D 20mm f/2.8	£519.00
AF-D 24mm f/2.8	£349.99*
AF-D 28mm f/2.8	£209.00
AF-D 50mm f/1.4	£219.99
AF-D 50mm f/1.8	£99.99
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AF-D 85mm f/1.8	£339.00
AF-D 85mm f/1.4	£799.99*
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AF-S 500mm f/4 IF-ED II Black	£5249.00*
AF-S 12-24mm f/4G DX IF ED	£749.99*
AF-S 17-55mm f/2.8G IF-ED D	£979.00
AF-D 18-35mm f/3.5-4.5	£319.99
AF-S 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 G	£99.99
AF-S 18-70mm f/3.5-4.5	£189.99
AF-D 24-85mm f/2.8-4 IF	£459.00
AF-S 24-85mm f/3.5-4.5G ED	£279.00
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AF-S 28-70mm f/2.8D IF ED	£1219.00
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AF-G 28-100mm f/3.5-5.6G	£72.00
AF-D 28-105mm f/3.5-4.5 IF	£309.99
AF-G 28-200mm f/3.5-5.6 IF ED Silv	£199.00
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AF-G 70-300mm f/4-5.6	£149.99
AF-D 70-300mm f/4-5.6 ED	£279.99
AF-S 70-200mm f/2.8G IF VR ED	£1249.00
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- 5.1 million pixels
- 3 x optical zoom
- Ultra Slim Design

Our Price **£229.99**

SRP £279.99

Fuji 256MB SD + Nikon Leather Case **£274.99***

Coolpix 7600

- 7.1 million pixels
- 3 x optical zoom
- In Camera Red Eye Removal

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SRP £249.99

Fuji 256MB SD + Nikon Leather Case **£253.99***

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Coolpix 7900

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- 3 x optical zoom
- Includes Lithium Ion Battery + Charger

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SRP £299.99

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EN-EL2 (2500, 3500, SQ)	£29.99*
EN-EL3 (D100, D70, D70s)	£46.99*
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EN-EL3A (D70s)	£49.99
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2x EN-EL4 (D2H, D2X)	£149.99*
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EN-EL6 (Coolwalker)	£59.99
EN-EL7 (8400, 8800)	£39.99
EN-EL7e with LED indicator	£49.99
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MB-CP11 for 8800	£124.99

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MH18 (for EN-EL3)	£34.99
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EH-4 (for D1X/ D1H)	£74.99
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EH-53 (for 4500, 5700, 8700)	£39.99
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EH-61 (for 2100, 3100)	£19.99
EH-62A (for 4200, 5200)	£29.99
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Other Accessories

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WT1 Wireless Transmitter	£349.99
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Coolscan 5000 ED	£699.00*
Coolscan 9000	£2149.00*

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IA20 IX240 APS Adaptor	£159.99
FH-869G 120/220 strip film holder glass for 9000ED	£299.99

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Leather Case for 5000/5400/8400	£24.99*
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Leather Case for 4800	£18.99*
Leather Case for S1/S2	£19.99*
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WP-CP4 (for 5900/ 7900)	£139.99*
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BM4 LCD Monitor Cover (D70)	£6.99
BM5 LCD Monitor Cover (D70s)	£6.99

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AF 14mm f2.8 Aspherical EX (gelatin filter)	£533.99*	---
AF 15mm f2.8 Diagonal Fisheye (1 Canon Only)	£389.99*	---
AF 20mm f1.8 Aspherical EX DG 82mm	£244.99*	£292.99*
AF 30mm f/1.4 EX DC HSM 62mm	£284.99*	£304.99*
AF 50mm f/2.8 EX DG Macro 55mm	£194.99*	£209.99*
AF 105mm f/2.8 EX DG Macro 58mm	£279.99*	£306.99*
AF 150mm f/2.8 EX DG HSM Macro 72mm	£438.99*	£469.99*
AF 10-20mm f/4-5.6 EX DC HSM 77mm	£329.99*	£373.99*
AF 12-24mm f4.5-5.6 DG EX Asp HSM	£439.99*	---
AF 15-30mm f3.5-4.5 DG EX	£299.99*	---
AF 17-35mm f2.8-4 EX DG Asp 77mm	£299.99*	£353.99*
AF 18-50mm f/2.8 EX DC 67mm	£309.99*	£340.99*
AF 18-50mm f3.5-5.6 DC 58mm	£79.99*	£96.99*
AF 18-50mm f3.5-5.6 DC + AF 55-200mm f/4-5.6 DC 58mm and 55mm	£174.99*	£208.98*
AF 18-125mm f3.5-5.6 DC SLD 62mm	£189.99*	£209.99*
AF 18-200mm f/3.5-6.3 DC 62mm	£254.99*	£274.99*
AF 20-40mm F2.8 EX 82mm	£279.99*	£332.99*
AF 24-60mm F2.8 DG EX 77mm	£274.99*	£328.99*
AF 24-70mm f2.8 Asp EX DG Macro 82mm	£279.99*	£342.99*
AF 24-135mm f2.8-4.5 Asp IF 77mm	£239.99*	£283.99*
AF 28-70mm f2.8-4 Aspherical 58mm	£Phone	£Phone
AF 28-135mm f3.8-5.6 IF Asp Macro 62mm	£99.99*	£119.99*
AF 28-200mm f3.5-5.6 IF AspDL DG Macro 62mm	£138.99*	£158.99*
AF 28-300mm f3.5-6.3 DG Macro 62mm	£189.99*	£209.99*
AF 50-500mm f4-6.3 APO EX DG HSM 86mm	£719.99*	£781.99*
AF 55-200mm f/4-5.6 DC 55mm	£99.99*	£115.99*
AF 70-200mm f2.8 APO EX DG HSM 77mm	£599.99*	£643.00*
AF 70-300mm f4-5.6 APO DG Macro 58mm	£159.99*	£176.99*
AF 80-400mm f4.5-5.6 EX DG APO OS 77mm	£834.99*	£878.99*
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was £1099.99 — Lens Sold Separately

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SD10 +18-50mm	£539.99
SD10 +18-125mm	£639.99
Sigma SD10 + 18-50mm + 55-200mm DC Lenses	£654.98

See web for low lens prices

Sigma Flashguns
Available in Canon/ Nikon/ Sigma

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EF 500 ST DG + Digital Concepts Fast Charger + NiMH Batteries	£129.99*
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EF 500 DG Super + Digital Concepts Fast Charger + NiMH Batteries	£199.99*
EM 140 DG Macro	£279.99
EM 140 DG Macro + Digital Concepts Fast Charger + NiMH Batteries	£299.99

Please phone/ see web for Other Accessories

SONY DSC W5

- 5.1 Megapixel
- 3 x Optical Zoom
- 2.5" LCD

Camera Only £179.99

+ Sony 256MB Pro + Sony LCS WA Case **£230.00***

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Sony DSC W7

- 7.2 million pixels
- 2.5" LCD screen
- 3 x optical zoom
- Carl Zeiss® Vario-Tessar® Lens

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DSC T5 *NEW*	£229.99*
DSC T9 *NEW*	£Phone
DSC M2 *NEW*	£Phone
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DSC W7	£224.99*
DSC W17	£243.00*
DSC H1 *NEW*	£279.99*
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SONY DSC P200

- 7.2 Megapixel
- 3x Optical Zoom
- 2.0" Hybrid LCD

Camera Only £229.99*

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Sony DSC T3S

- 5.1 million pixels
- 3x optical zoom
- slim design

SRP £299.99 **Our Price £219.90***

DSC T3 + LCS THC Leather Case + 256MB **£274.99***

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- 5.1 million pixels
- 2.5" LCD screen
- 3 x optical zoom
- ultra-slim design 9.8mm

SRP £349.99 **Our Price £254.99***

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- 8.0 million pixels
- Compact design

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Olympus Lenses

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- MPEG4

SRP £299.99 **Our Price £249.99**

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- 3x Optical zoom
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NEW!

- 6.1 Million Pixels
- 2.5" LCD
- compact design

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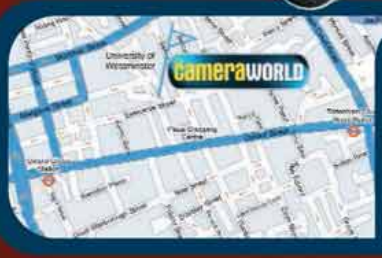

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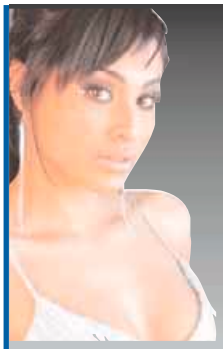

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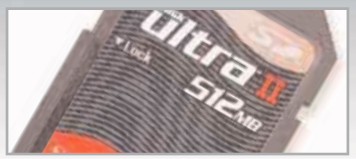

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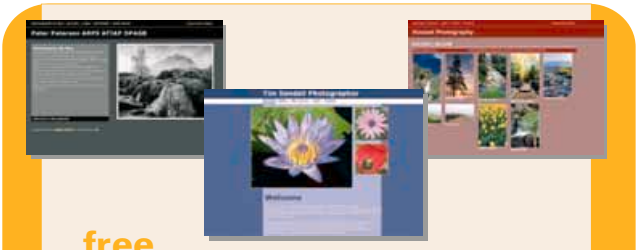

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